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Pepperdine University
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

FATHER INVOLVEMENT IN AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: A CASE STUDY

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

by

Elena Levine-Melendez

November, 2014

Diana B. Hiatt-Michael, Ed.D. – Dissertation Chairperson

This dissertation, written by

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under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family. To my late father, Heriberto for instilling in me the value of education, persistence, and for teaching me to be an active learner in and out of the classroom. Your involvement in my early education stimulated my desire to broaden my knowledge every day. Dad, you always told me, “You must use your education to improve the lives of others.” No worries dad; I am here to do just that! Thank you and I love you papa. To my mother Elena, for your love, and every-night encouragement you gave me to complete this dissertation journey. Mom, I appreciate your sacrifice, prayers, and unconditional love for me. I’ll always love you mom!

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ABSTRACT

This year-long research investigated fathers' involvement in 1 public elementary school in southern California that served an ethnic diverse and lower socioeconomic population. This case applied Epstein's 6 typologies to analyze the perceptions of 112 fathers and 132 mothers utilizing a 35-item validated questionnaire, followed by long interviews of fathers, school administrators, and teachers in addition to researcher's field notes.

Compared to prior studies, findings revealed that fathers and mothers reported that fathers' involvement in parenting and home learning was high. Responding to "all the time" and "sometimes," 91% of the fathers indicated they attended extracurricular activities; 87% participated in PTA activities; 86% attended parent-teacher conferences; 82% monitored or assisted with homework; 82% offered study space; 81% regularly purchased supplies; 75% provided computer and technology equipment; and 80% celebrated academic achievement. Utilizing 2 chi-square analyses to survey data, these findings applied to fathers who were employed (71%) or unemployed (29%) as well as to higher-educated fathers (community college degree and above) and fathers with a high school diploma or less ($p > .05$).

Applying a chi-square analysis to survey data, fathers' and mothers' perceptions were similar ($p > .05$) except volunteering, fathers indicating higher involvement. However, 88 to 100% fathers responded to "not at all" or "a few times" on the items in this typology, a low level of involvement. All groups of respondents reported fathers' low involvement in school decision-making and community collaboration activities.

Regarding communication, fathers indicated that they desired direct communication from the school such as e-mail blasts, text messages, and focused notices related to their child. Since fathers indicated that 32.0% were divorced or separated and almost half of the participating

mothers were single, targeted communication to fathers as well mothers is necessary to encourage father involvement. School personnel reported communication is primarily sent to one set of parents as accurate 2-parent information is difficult.

The study provides recommendations to stimulate father engagement, such as staff should connect with fathers during child pick-up and after-school activities. Also, staff should create a father-friendly school environment and offer focused, task-oriented opportunities to involve fathers as well as social activities that attract mothers.

Keywords: father involvement, parent-school communication, family involvement, parenting.

Chapter 1: Problem and Purpose

Economists explain that in order to keep the competitive edge of a society for continued growth and prosperity, the educational level of a society must be high (Krueger & Lindahl, 2001; Sianesi & Van Reenen, 2003; Temple & Ludger, 2006; Topel, 1999). A high educational achievement level is important to the continuation of America's leadership in global economics. Because education prepares students to compete nationally and globally, American policy has supported education reforms for the past century (Hanushek, Woessmann, Jamison, & Jamison, 2008; Hiatt-Michael, 2010a; Tyler, 1949). Specifically, the U.S. Department of Education, Office of the Press Secretary (2006), states the following: "education is an important way to make sure America remains [globally] competitive in the 21st century" (p. 9).

Two factors that are supported by a large body of research and that relates to student academic success and high educational attainment are (a) the quality of teachers and (b) parent involvement in their children's schooling (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu, & Easton, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2013; Davies, 2013; Epstein, 2013; Hiatt-Michael & Hands, 2010). A significant body of research indicates that when parents are active in their children's education, they send a powerful message to their children that school is important (Epstein, 2011; Hiatt-Michael, 2010a; Walker, Hoover-Dempsey, Whetsel, & Green, 2004). When this message is sent by parents, the children respond with a positive attitude toward school and improved academic achievement (Bryk et al., 2010; Gonzalez-DeHass, Willems, & Holbein, 2005). Bryk et al.'s (2010) study on school improvement in Chicago revealed that parent involvement was a critical factor related to improved academic achievement of students. When parents perform an active role in educating their children, their involvement enhances and facilitates the children's growth and development (Lamb, 2004).

However, Ho and Hiatt-Michael (2012) noted parent involvement research has primarily been research on mothers' involvement in their children's schooling. Thus, research on father involvement is largely missing in the equation of the factors that tend to support children's academic achievement. Therefore, studies in father engagement in their children's education merits attention by educational researchers.

Statement of Problem

Ho and Hiatt-Michael (2012) noted that research revealed that fathers tended to be involved in ways that are not perceived by school personnel. For example, across cultures fathers assume the primary role as breadwinner, even though statistics reveal mothers are highly represented in the workforce. This value keeps fathers away from the home and limits their involvement with their children. Fathers tended to become more involved with their children's studies, homework, and educational opportunities when their children became adolescents.

Much of the research on parent involvement during the past 30 years has produced findings that revealed maternal involvement (Epstein, 2013; Ho & Hiatt-Michael, 2012). Thus, Ho and Hiatt-Michael remarked that little is known about paternal involvement in their children's schooling. Other scholars who have done research on the importance of paternal involvement have noted that great amount of research has also focused on the frequency and its impact of contact that nonresident fathers have had with their children (Coley, 2001; Duursma, Pan, & Raikes, 2008; Marsiglio, Amato, Day, & Lamb, 2000; Marsiglio, Roy, & Fox, 2005; Roopnarine, 2004; Yogman, Kindlon, & Earls, 1995). The constrained existing research on father involvement in their children's schooling has led researchers and theorists to develop several lists of factors that appear to influence fathers' current engagement. For example, McBride, Schoppe-Sullivan, and Ho (2005) have indicated that reasons for a father's low

motivation to get involved in their children's education could include personal characteristics, demographic characteristics, or personal circumstances.

Limited or non-existent paternal involvement in schooling may impact their children's educational achievement. The message regarding the importance of school begins when the child enters an educational setting. Because of this concern regarding the apparent limited to non-existent paternal involvement in schools, an in-depth study was merited to ascertain paternal involvement in schools at the time children enter school.

Statement of Purpose

In the United States, an elementary school is the first compulsory level of education for American children. This study is a case study of a typical Title I American elementary school with a diverse population. This study examined the reasons why fathers state that they became involved, the ways in which fathers presently report that they are involved, and how they perceive the school should promote father involvement. In this study, the student's father or father figure was the central focus of the data collection and interpretation. The studied father involvement activities encompassed all of Epstein's six typologies and included such activities as reading and responding to school communication, attending parent-teacher conferences, monitoring and assisting in class assignments, helping out within the classroom, volunteering in fundraising, serving in advisory committees, and participating in school-sponsored social events (Epstein, 2011; Hill & Taylor, 2004). This researcher gathered evidence to answer the formulated research questions. This data collection garnered information from site administrators, grade level teachers, and mothers as well the fathers in order to support and enhance the data gathered on fathers' perceptions of their involvement in their children's schooling.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

In order to discern fathers' involvement in their children's school life, the following research questions and hypotheses were formulated for this case study:

- RQ1: How do fathers perceive that they are involved in their child's education in the areas of Epstein's six typologies?
- RQ2: How do mothers perceive that fathers are involved in their child's education in the areas of Epstein's six typologies?
- H1: Significant differences exist between fathers' and mothers' perceptions of fathers' involvement in the areas of Epstein's six typologies.
- H2: A significant difference exists between fathers' perceptions of their involvement and their employment status.
- H3: A significant difference exists between fathers' perceptions of their involvement and level of education of fathers.
- RQ3: How do fathers explain their involvement in their children's education?
- RQ4: What are the perceptions of site administrators and teachers regarding fathers' involvement in their children's education?

Theoretical Underpinnings of the Study

In order to assess the picture of fathers' disengagement in their children's education, a well-known and widely used theoretical model by Joyce Epstein (2001) was used. The overlapping spheres of influence of family, school, and community model provided a broad theoretical frame from which to examine the predictors of fathers' involvement in their children's education.

The overlapping spheres of influence model is explained as three spheres representing school, family, and community partnerships. These three spheres must interact with each other in order to produce a positive effect in the students' learning. In other words, Epstein explains that teachers' efforts to involve families make a great contribution to the student's education as it promotes student satisfaction and better grades. The overlapping spheres of influence model and the six types of involvement model can be combined to create a guide for any interested party to examine the level of involvement. Epstein and Sanders (2000) suggested that schools have an obligation for active participation in building a strong home-school partnership using a team approach guided by these models.

Within Epstein's model of overlapping spheres lies a framework of six types of involvement. This framework includes the following six categories of practices that involve teachers, students, parents, and the community: (a) parenting, (b) communicating, (c) volunteering, (d) learning at home, (e) decision making, and (f) collaborating with the community (Epstein, 2001, 2005). Please see Definition of Terms list.

Many schools utilized Epstein's six types of involvement to support the mandates of the Goals 2000 and No Child Left Behind acts (Ho & Hiatt-Michael, 2012). These acts advocate that students' success depends on the strengths of the partnerships between school and home. Thus, the present study utilized Epstein's (2011) six types of involvement to assess the ways that fathers are involved through the survey and semi-structured interviews.

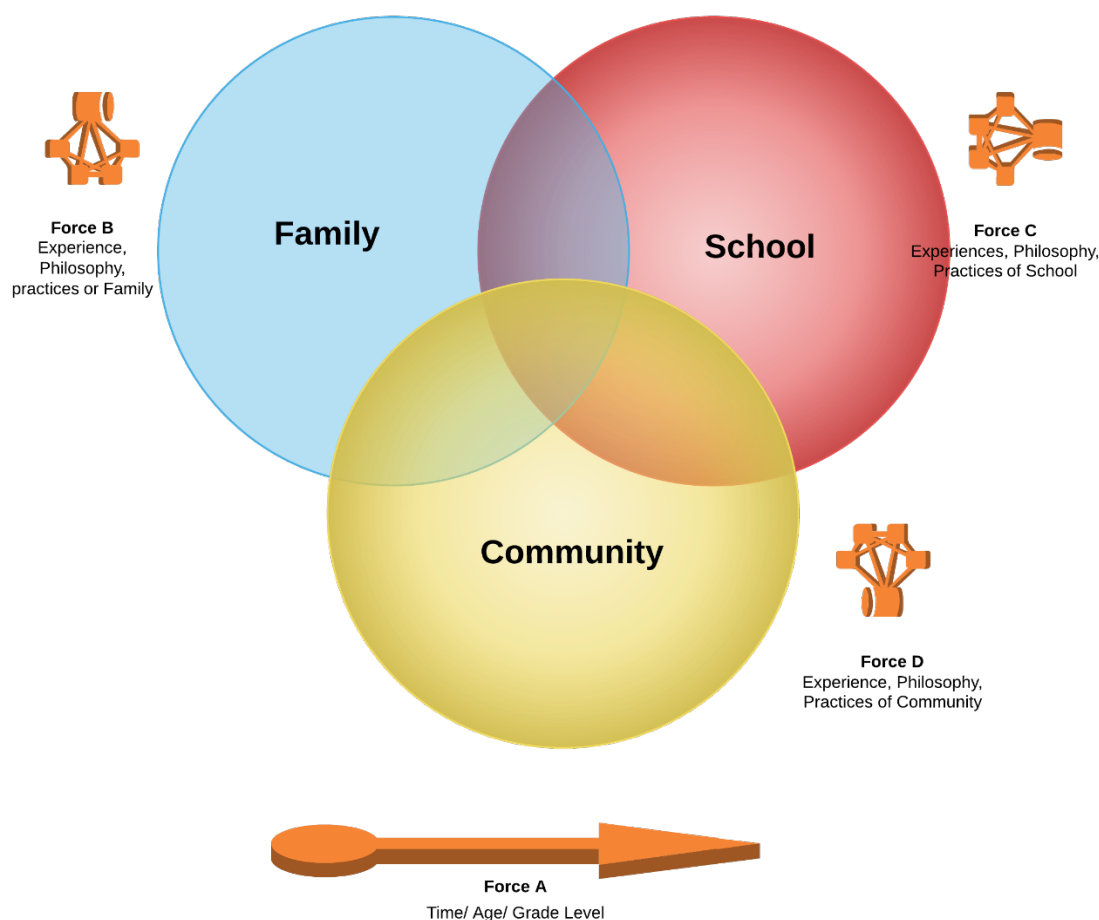


Figure 1. Overlapping spheres of influence of family, school, and community on children's learning (external structure of theoretical model). Reprinted from "Schools, Family, and Community Partnerships: Preparing Educators and Improving Schools," by J. L. Epstein, 2001. Reprinted with permission.

The external portion of the model shows three major contributors to students' growth: the family, the school, and the community in which the student interacts. These three spheres are dependent on each other to either be pushed apart or be pulled together, depending on the interaction among the persons involved. Within this model, there are some practices that the school, family, or community do separately or together to enhance academic success.

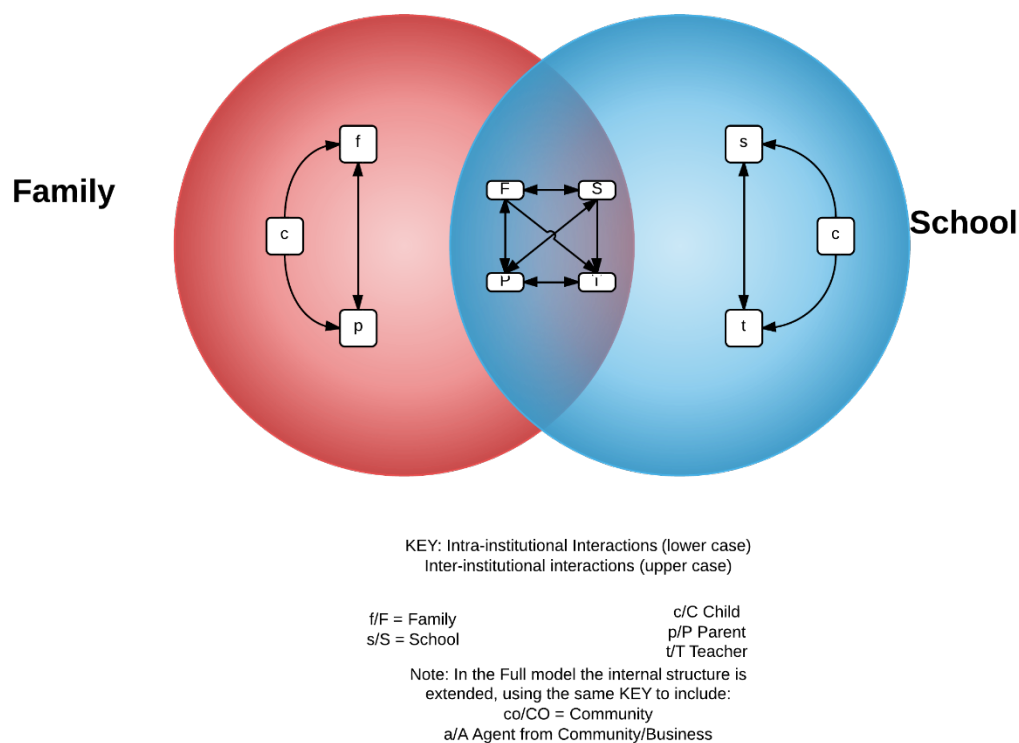


Figure 2. Reprinted from “Schools, Family, and Community Partnerships: Preparing Overlapping spheres of influence of family, school, and community on children’s learning (external structure of theoretical model). Educators and Improving Schools,” by J. L. Epstein, 2001. Reprinted with permission.

The *internal* part of the model shows the importance, complexity, and the patterns of interpersonal relations of people at school, home, and community. The social relations performed in this stage can be comprehended at an institutional level, such as when the school communicates the same message to all the parents to attend a special event. Also, at an individual level can be understood when the school invites a parent to talk individually (Epstein et al., 2009).

Significance of the Study

Practical significance. On September 2013, at the European Network about Parents in Education (ERNAPE) 9th international conference, held in Lisbon, Portugal, researchers from around the world gathered to discuss *The Issue of Equity: Taking Research on Partnership Program Development to Scale in Practice*. At this conference, Epstein (2013), Director of the Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships and the National Network of Partnerships Schools (NNPS) stated the following about scale in practice on parental involvement:

Looking to the future, a very challenging topic in the United States and in other nations is the “scale-ability” of research-based (or evidence-based) results of partnerships programs and practices. After more than three decades of studies by countless researchers that confirm the importance of school, family, and community partnerships for student success in school, it is imperative to translate research to good policy and useful practice, so the more schools—indeed all schools—organize effective programs to engage parents, other family members, and community partners in a way that supports student success in school. (p. 13)

These words lead to the central question of this conference where partnership in practice was discussed: “What have we learned about both opportunities and challenges is to press forward so schools develop and sustain goal-linked partnership programs to increase student achievement, good behavior, postsecondary planning, and other indicators of success” (Epstein, 2013, p. 13). In this case, the focus is to transform the research into practice of father involvement in their children’s schooling or school activities.

Through this study, along with its findings and recommendations, the academic community will become more knowledgeable of the details that surround the issue of apparent low fathers’ participation in their children’s education. The possible results would aid administrators, educators, parents, and community members to make greater efforts to urge fathers to become more familiar with their children’s education both at home and in school

activities. Correspondingly, when educators are acquainted with the fathers' living situation, special efforts on the part of educators to reach out to fathers can have a better effect of stimulating their own and others engagement in children's learning environments both at home and at school (Fagan & Iglesias, 1999; McBride, Rane, & Bae, 2001). Hence, the efforts of all parties in father involvement can bring positive outcomes in student achievement and the father-children-school relationship.

This study is significant because it provides valuable information to school districts, administrators, educators, mothers, and especially fathers regarding fathers' perceptions of their involvement in a Title I public school. In addition, fathers provided suggestions to increase fathers' involvement in their children's education. The emerging evidence can help to focus on programs that influence schools to provide more opportunities to fathers on how to become more involved at home and at school. Because elementary schools strive for continuous student achievement, understanding what creates positive outcomes with paternal involvement is vital.

Methodological significance. This study built upon Epstein's model as well as Ho and Hiatt-Michael's (2012) research on father engagement. The present study used a case study approach that employed mixed-methods. This type of research provides the researcher with an opportunity to study the circumstances without having engaged the participants in any experimentation (Key, 1997). Moreover, Merriam (1998) points out that case study design helps the reader to visualize the findings and integrate them into their own practice. The mixed method design was combined with qualitative and quantitative data collection. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) state that the mixed method approach provides advantages to show results in the quantitative approach and explains how it was obtained in the qualitative approach. Accordingly, this case study also employed a triangulation method to improve the accuracy of

the researcher's judgment by rounding out the data bearing on the same phenomenon (Jick, 1979). Hence, this case study used data collected from surveys, interviews, and field notes that delivered insights about the factors that present challenges for fathers to become involved in their children's school activities.

Theoretical significance. The findings of this study enhanced the utilization of Epstein's (2011) six types of involvement in regards to father involvement. Most research on parental involvement has had more participation from mothers, so it was important to target fathers and study their involvement specifically.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, selected terms are used in a specific manner. Therefore, these terms have been defined as follows:

- Collaborating with the community: Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development (Epstein, 2011).
- Communicating: Two-way communication initiated by teacher, principal, or counselor with parents about the student's needed improvement (Epstein, 2011).
- Child/student: In this study, a child or student is one who attends a K-6th school.
- Custodial fathers: Custodial father is defined as the parent with whom the child or children live when their biological mother lives outside the household, although there may be equal joint- or split-custody arrangements (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2013).
- Inclusive decision making: The practice of including parents in school, decisions, and developing parent leaders and representatives (Epstein, 2011).

- Elementary school: Determined by state law as a nonprofit institutional day residential school that provides elementary education (Wright & Wright, 2007).
- Father (n.d.): The dictionary defines the term mother as follows: one related to another in a way suggesting that of father to child.
- Father engagement/involvement: In this study, engagement or involvement is the act of a father interacting with his child in academic activities.
- Learning at home: Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning (Epstein, 2011).
- Low-income fathers: According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2013), a low-income person (father) is someone who earns \$0.00 to \$11,490.00 annually.
- Mother (n.d.): The dictionary defines mother as follows: a female parent or guardian.
- Parental involvement: The National Middle School Association (n.d.) defines parental involvement as follows: Having an awareness of and involvement in schoolwork, understanding of the interaction between parenting skills and student success in schooling, and a commitment to consistent communication with educators about student progress.
- Parenting: Families establish a home environment to support children (Epstein, 2011).
- Primary caregivers: According to the California Department of Public Health (2013), a primary caregiver is a person who consistently assumes the responsibility for the housing, health, or safety of the child.

- Site administrator: In this study, site administrator is the school principal or vice principal from the school at which the study was conducted.
- Teacher: Teacher is defined as a faculty member of the school at which the study was conducted.
- Volunteering: Volunteering is described as unpaid activities parents can do in their children's school to support school's programs (Epstein, 2011).

Key Assumptions

For this study, the researcher made the following assumptions:

1. Father engagement is important to a child's academic achievement at school;
2. Participants understood and honestly answered the survey items;
3. School personnel provided all available data related to the study, as requested;
4. Fathers were open and honest in their self-perceptions during the interviews; and
5. The researcher was unbiased and removed personal judgment throughout the data collection.

Delimitations of the Study

This study was limited to data collection at one public elementary school within the state of California. The population of this elementary school (as a pseudonym, George Washington School) is larger than the average elementary school in United States, reporting a student population of approximately 1025 students. This study was limited to father involvement in their children's education at George Washington School (GWS). Also, this research dealt with families and staff associated with a student population from kindergarten through sixth grade and a special day classroom (SDC).

Both the survey and the interviews were conducted in English as all participants in this study spoke English. The researcher offered to speak Spanish, but respondents stated that English was preferable for them. In a personal interview with the GWS principal, he mentioned that GWS's English Language Learner student body is about six percent; the school is not obligated to translate any documents into another language if parents of the English Language Learner student body comprise less than 15% of the school's population. This in accordance with EC Section 48985 (c) of the California Department of Education Bill 680 (R. Lots, personal communication, May 21, 2014).

Summary

This research aimed for an in-depth study of the issue of paternal involvement, especially father involvement, in children's lives in an elementary school; therefore, the researcher used a case study design that employed mixed methods approach. The theoretical framework included Epstein's (2011) model of overlapping spheres, which includes six types of involvement.

Organization of the Study

This research was arranged into five chapters, references, and appendixes. Chapter 1 contains the introduction of the problem and purpose. Chapter 2 contains a review of literature related to father involvement in their children's education. Chapter 3 contains a description of the methodology used to collect the required data. Chapter 4 includes the analysis of the data and its findings. Chapter 5 contains a summary, conclusions of the study, and recommendations for future research in father involvement in their children's schooling.

Chapter 2: Review of Related Literature and Research

I came to understand the importance of fatherhood through its absence—both in my life and in the lives of others. I came to understand that the hole a man leaves when he abandons his responsibility to his children is one that no government can fill. We can do everything possible to provide good jobs and good schools and safe streets for our kids, but it will never be enough to fully make up the difference. (Obama, 2009, p. 2)

Overview

Chapter 2 focuses on literature review about father involvement in their children's education. The knowledge obtained from reviewing literature on father involvement presented an opportunity to form a framework that could be used to increase the body of knowledge in effective and meaningful father engagement in their children's education.

Father involvement in a child's education was more visible during the agricultural era, gradually diminishing during the shift to an industrial society. During this technological change in society, children and parents distanced themselves from each other as fathers were employed away from the home. Since that distance occurred and was perceived by educators as a loss, parent involvement in schools has grown into a field of study (Hiatt-Michael, 2008). For the purpose of this study, literature related to father involvement will be given priority. However, some studies describing maternal involvement will be included to note how fathers might be involved in a similar manner. This chapter was organized by highlighting the major sections such as historical background, change in home lives of fathers and mothers, cultural groups, description of parent involvement models, research on parent involvement, and what the schools are doing now to foster father involvement.

Historical Background of Fatherhood

Historically, the culture in the United States has regarded the mother to be the primary caregiver and nurturer, with the father as the enforcer of authority and the breadwinner (Campos,

2008). Nonetheless, during the early years, the father took responsibility for his children's education by teaching them discipline, religion, and basic academic skills, as well as instilling the importance of education (Berger, 1981; Shostak, 1967). Spring (2005) explains that later, during the formation of the American colonies, the colonies took control over education and schools taught the particular religion sect that most populated the area of the school. Hiatt-Michael (2008) explains that the American scene in elementary education was one of local parental control of school governance, parental support of curriculum, parental choice of teachers, and parental support of religious teachings of the school. As the school system changed during the industrial revolution, due to the change in economic forces, family dynamics changed as well.

Ho and Hiatt-Michael (2012) note that a large body of research is focused on mother involvement and little on fathers' involvement. Chapters by various authors in this volume describe how the demands for income production place constraints on the parent-child relationship at the personal, family, and socio-contextual alignment. Prior literature had reported these constraints (Belsky, 1996; Lamb, Pleck, Charnov, & Levine, 1985, 1987). The constraints caused by the factors of parental motivation raise the question of how fathers get involved in their children's developmental process (Lamb, 1997; Pleck, 1997). Nowadays, European countries are examining the complexity of the current society to initiate changes that will affect father roles that have been engrained in fathers for generations (Amaya Martinez-Gonzalez, Rodriguez-Ruiz, & Rodrigo-Lopez, 2012). Other researchers explain that the new father expectations such as caring for their children at home and collaborating with the schools in their children's academics—necessary due to mothers' involvement in the workforce—are still far from being adjusted, because families have been carrying the male traditions for generations.

Many families have also other reasons such as jobs that require long hours and non-traditional family compositions (Lamb, 2004; McBride et al., 2001). Studies show that fathers get more involved in their children's school activities and at home when the children are young than when they move to compulsory secondary schools (Appl, Brown, & Stone, 2008; Karther, 2002; Ho & Hiatt-Michael, 2012; Lopez, 2001; McBride et al., 2005; Ortiz & Stile, 2002). These studies indicate that parental involvement in paternal tasks deserves more researcher, policymaker, and professional attention. In order to understand father's involvement, Lamb (1997) suggests a review of historical materials that provide insights on fatherhood in the past and present.

The sprawling literature about changes in economy and family structure in the early years, shows the new changes to family structure and dynamics, especially fatherhood. Lamb (1997) offers four dimensions that summarize the transformation of fatherhood since the time of colonial America. The first dimension of fatherhood is described as the *moral teacher or guide* during the Puritan through the colonial into early republican periods. Fathers assumed the responsibility to teach their children moral values according to their Christian values. Fathers were also responsible for their children's education so their children could read the religious texts. It was important for men to equip their children with the academic tools necessary to live the Christian ways; therefore, pride in their children's education was fundamental. As farmers and tradesmen, occupations often allowed fathers to work in close proximity to the home. Both Demos (1982) and Pleck (1984) highlight that fathers were models for their children to live their parents' Christian lifestyle. The Christian teachings embraced by the children gave the father the title of a primary guide. In later decades, the father's role shifted.

The second dimension of fatherhood is described as *The Breadwinner* that came when the father's role changed as an accommodation to the time of industrialization, from the mid-

19th century through the Great Depression (Pleck, 1984). This phase defined men as the economic provider of their households, because fathers assumed the responsibility of being the primary earner while mothers were more in charge of their children's supervision and learning. Lamb (1997) explains that in order for fathers to function as breadwinners, their jobs required them to be out of their family's view for periods of time. The out-of-home jobs brought monetary opportunities during the industrialization period. Literature reviewed implies that during this time, primarily letters written between fathers and sons, showed that fathers were still the moral value teachers as well as being breadwinners while far away from their homes.

Later, the view of fatherhood changed to *The Sex-Role Model* dimension. Although the moral guide and breadwinner responsibilities remained central to the fathers and the family overall, a shift in fatherhood took another turn for a more distantly involved father (Lamb, 2004). Father's first call for their presence in their children's lives came through the times of the Great Depression, the New Deal, and the Second World War during the 1930s through 1940s. Levy (1943), Strecker (1946), and Wylie (1942) point out that books and articles in the professional and popular literature publicized that fathers were not doing a great job at being strong male role models, especially with their sons. Also, Ehrenreich and English (1979) point out that the fathers' shortcomings as a male role model were clearly stated in the theatrical works such as *Rebel Without a Cause* and ridiculed in the cartoon entitled *Blondie* and the comedy called *All in the Family*. As these calls for better fatherhood were being made through all types of performing arts, the era of the *nurturant father* began.

In the mid-1970s fourth dimension of fatherhood appeared and it was described as *The New Nurturant Father*. Lamb (1997) explains that during this period all sources of media accentuated that nurturant fathers were good fathers. Fatherhood was highlighted as an

opportunity for men to show their feminine side; it was beneficial for both man and child to spend time together (Lamb, 2004). Calls on fathers were constantly made by all sources of media because fathers had distanced themselves more than ever before from their children's lives. Lamb (2004) explains that writers and commentators called on fathers to get more involved in their children's lives. At this time, active fatherhood was highlighted in the fictional works such as *Kramer vs. Kramer* and *The World According to Garp*. Griswold (1995) adds that fathers were encouraged in many forms to get more active in their children's lives. After the period of decrease in paternal involvement, researchers and anthropologists took interest in conducting studies with the purpose to educate schools, parents, and the community that student success was everyone's responsibility (Epstein & Sanders, 2000; Simon, 2000). Garbarino (2000) suggests the following:

In the next several years, it will be most important for researchers and theorists to pursue a more complete understanding of fatherhood and father involvement. Attention should be paid, not only to direct interaction between fathers and children, but also to fathers' other roles and responsibilities. Of particular importance are the breadwinning function and their influences on child development as mediated by the quality of their relationships with the children's mothers. (p. 17)

He also explains that researchers and theorists have generalized fatherhood, although various cultures have different perceptions about fatherhood, and this perception affects fatherhood functions. Furthermore, the U.S. government has attempted to clarify family responsibilities, including father engagement in their children's education, through legislative support incorporated more than 40 years ago.

Legislative Support of Parental Involvement

In order to improve this element in children's education, it is worthwhile to examine the federal policies that for years have been used in monitoring and enforcing parental provisions. For over 50 years, federal policies have been reviewed and revised periodically to guide

educators, families, and community partners in an effort to improve parental participation. Some of these are Head Start policies, family leave policies, Title I regulations, Goals 2000 targets, Individuals with disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Improving Americas Schools Act (IASA), and lastly the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act renewing the version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA; U.S. Department of Education, 2013).

Goals 2000. In 1994, the U.S. Congress passed Goals 2000, namely the Educate America Act, the purpose of which was to make progress in learning and teaching by providing a blueprint to support educational reform. Goals 2000 was the foundation for congress to allocate federal education funds, from an educational framework, and establish family involvement. One of the Goals 2000 targets was to train parents and provide them with support to try to get them engaged to become the first teachers in their children's education. Ensuing was the No Child Left Behind Section 1118 in which support for parental engagement was embedded as well.

During the past two decades, federal legislators have supported Goals 2000, Educate America Act, No Child Left Behind, and Race to the Top (Borwoski & Sneed, 2006; Guilfoyle, 2006; Haycock, 2006; Hess, 2006; Hess & Petrelli, 2006; Kane, Douglas, & Geppert, 2002; A. Lewis, 2006; Mitchell & Sakney, 2000). Nonetheless, Goals 2000 was the first major federal policy that mentioned family involvement as one of the goals (Schneider & Coleman, 1993; Swap, 1987; U.S. Department of Education, 1986, 1994). Later, in 2002, the Bush Administration enacted the NCLB act, and the Title I guidelines were created. The NCLB and Title I encourage parents and schools to work collectively to ensure students achieve academic success (Jacobi, Hogue, & Wittreich, 2003). More recently, the Obama Administration sent to Congress the Blueprint for Reform of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, addressing an accountability system. Also, the ESEA reauthorization will recognize and reward high-

poverty schools and districts that are showing improvement in getting their students on the path to success, using measures of progress and growth (The White House, 2010). Epstein (2011) states, “School policies must be judged on whether they enable teachers, families, and others in the community to work effectively together—as an action team—on behalf of the children they share” (p. 303). Additionally, at the 2013 ERNAPE conference, several researchers stated that it is time for educational practitioners to create programs that involve research and practice (Allext-Snider & Karsli, 2013; Amaya Martinez-Gonzalez, Rodriguez-Ruiz, & Rodrigo-Lopez, 2013; Deslandes et al., 2013; Hiatt-Michael, 2013). Accordingly, the creation of parent involvement and support programs has led to more research on parent involvement.

Importantly, however, since the 1990s there has been an increased interest on the part of policy makers, academic practitioners, and researchers alike for a more defined role of fatherhood (e.g., Booth & Crouter, 1998; Dienhart, 1998; Doherty, Kouneski, & Erickson, 1998; Hawkins & Dollahite, 1997; Lamb, 1997; Marsiglio, 1995; Snarey, 1993). Since then, the message to fathers to take an active role in their children’s emotional and academic lives has been sent through all sources of media (Coltrane & Allan, 1994; Furstenberg, 1995; Tamis-LeMonda & Cabrera, 1999). Despite the increase in frequency and formats of conveying this message, studies suggest that fathers are still behind mothers when it comes to parent-child involvement. For example, Parker and Wang (2013) from the Pew Research Center report that 63% of fathers say that they help their children with homework, and 54% of fathers reported that they do some type of activity with their children more than once a week. Conversely, 68% of mothers reported that they spent time with their children, including those who hold jobs. In other words, the mothers perceived themselves to help their children more than the fathers helped.

Parent involvement has been linked to cognitive advances and learning (Ninio & Rinott, 1988; Nugent, 1991) as well as greater academic improvement (Cooksey & Fondell, 1996; McBride et al., 2005). Of particular interest, in June, 2011, U. S. President Barack Obama launched the Fatherhood and Mentoring Initiative in an effort to call on all fathers to step up to their responsibility of being present in their child's life. In this initiative, President Obama invites fathers to provide healthy academic growth in their children, be a positive role model, and to partner with fatherhood and family-serving groups around the country.

The White House (2012) reported many statistics concerning effects that father involvement and father absence can have on children. These reports give an overview of some of the statistics about fathers and father involvement that are available. For example, one out of every three children in America—over 24 million in total—live in a home without their biological father present. The data show that low-income men from communities of color are significantly more likely to be nonresident fathers than resident fathers (i.e., more likely not to live with their children). Roughly one out of every three Hispanic children and more than half of African-American children grow up in homes without their fathers present.

The NCLB Act. In 2002, the NCLB (Public Law 107-110) was signed into law as part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which updated the legislation passed in 1965. This law allocates federal funds and requires states, districts, and schools to improve the educational system that serves children from economically disadvantaged families. This system allows school leaders to develop district-level and school-based policies and programs for more parental involvement (Epstein, 2011). Also, it provides parents the opportunity to get involved in their children's education by having access to achievement data and assurance that their children were receiving a quality education (NCLB, 2002; Simpson, LaCava, & Graner, 2004).

The NCLB Section 1118 has improved with each reauthorization of ESEA, reflecting advances in sociological and educational theories about district leadership for school improvement. The requirements also call for the application of research-based approaches for program development (Borman, Cookson, Sadovnick, & Spade, 1996; Epstein, 2001). For example,

Early Title I legislation on parental involvement mandated minor, often symbolic, participation of a few parent representatives on district and school advisory committees. Now the law outlines a “nested” system of actions at the state, district, and school levels for developing programs to involve all families in ways that support student achievement and success in school. (Epstein, 2011, p. 331)

Current legislation—including NCLB, Title I and other sections of ESEA such as Titles III, IV, V, and VI; and IDEA—contain sections that encourage the home-school-community relationship to improve, to provide academic success for all students (Epstein, 2011; Jacobi et al., 2003; Moles, 2010). In February 2006, Congress passed the fiscal year (FY) 2006 budget, called the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005. Section 7103 of this initiative launched a program of grants to promote healthy marriage and responsible fatherhood (Roberts, 2006).

The fatherhood and mentoring. In June 2010, President Obama’s administration introduced the Fatherhood and Mentoring Initiative in an effort to encourage fathers across the nation to attend to their childrearing responsibilities. This initiative is distributed through different partnerships and family-serving groups aimed to engage fathers in the intellectual, emotional, and financial well-being of their children (The White House, 2012). The Obama Administration created five goals to support father involvement:

- Goal 1: Build an inviting environment for fathers to get involved in their children’s academic, emotional, and economic environment.
- Goal 2: Maintain programs for low-income fathers to aid their economic stability.

- Goal 3: Sustain programs that keep the family together since child's birth.
- Goal 4: Funding programs that unite non-resident fathers and their children.
- Goal 5: Create research-based programs and policies on father engagement.

The White House (2012) reports that the law was updated by the Obama Administration that created programs for fathers that for any reason are not able to spend time with their children. These programs include the following: (a) Pathways to Responsible Fatherhood Grants through the Department of Health and Human Services aids fathers to overcome barriers so they can be effective and nurturing fathers, and (b) Reconnecting Fathers and Families to Services through the Department of Housing and Urban Development holds special events to promote responsible fatherhood that leads to children's well-being.

Fathers' active participation makes pronounced and unique contributions to the child's overall well-being, including social, emotional, behavioral, language, and education development (Buchanan & Flouri, 2004; Lamb, 2004; Roggman, Boyce, Cook, Christiansen, & Jones, 2004; A. Sarkadi, Kristiansson, Oberklaid, & Bremberg, 2008), which allows for the child to become more competent in the social world (Flinn & Geary, 2001). Additionally, other studies have highlighted that children with involved, loving fathers are much more likely than children who have uninvolved fathers to do well in school; have healthy self-esteem; exhibit empathy and pro-social behavior; and avoid high-risk behaviors such as drug use, truancy, and delinquency (Horn & Sylvester, 2002). Therefore, fathers' committed engagement has been found to increase well-being in their children's lives (B. Sarkadi & Wells, 2011).

The presence and active engagement not only help children do well in school, but also help reduce high-risk behaviors (Dare To Be King – Urban Leadership Institute, 2006). Conversely, children who grow up without a father face enormous risks of delinquency in school

compared to those who have an involved father. The Dare To Be King – Urban Leadership Institute (2006) reports that when fathers are involved in their children's lives, the children tend to receive school disciplinary measures less frequently.

Research has also found that committed fathers who spend quality time with their children create a stronger relationship as they not only play but become interested in their children's academic activities, such as shared book reading (Lamb & Tamis-LeMonda, 2004). Other researchers found that strong father-child relationships at a child's young age creates high levels of father involvement, contributes to the child's development (McLanahan & Carlson, 2002; Yeung, Sandberg, Davis-Kean, & Hofferth, 2001). Together with a strong relationship, fathers tend to participate more in school-based activities at a higher rate than those who are distant from their children (Campos, 2008). Studies reveal that play and companionship, as part of quality-spent time together, are contributing factors that enrich an active father-child relationship (Fagan, 1996, 2000; Kerns & Barth, 1995; Lindsey, Mize, & Pettit, 1997; Paquette, 2004). When there is an active interaction between the child and the father, play and companionship become richer and strong (McBride & Mills, 1993; Yeung et al., 2001). For example, a father who interacts with his child may reflect a different demeanor related to parenting and gender than a father who does not interact with his child (Cabrera & Garcia-Coll, 2004).

Several researchers found that fathers interact with children using somewhat different language than mothers. This may affect the child's response because fathers use a more varied and focused vocabulary (Bernstein-Ratner, 1988; Gleason, 1975; Lamb & Tamis-LeMonda, 2004). Some other studies suggest that fathers use more directives, requests for clarification, ask more questions, use references to past situations, and employ imperatives more than mothers do

when spending time with the child (Fash & Madison, 1981; Kavanaugh & Jirkovsky, 1982; Leaper, Anderson, & Sanders, 1998). This may suggest that strong father-child relationships bring diverse linguistic features to the child's learning.

Change in Home Lives of Fathers and Mothers

Fathers' perceptions of fatherhood. While researchers have investigated the effects of father involvement, others have investigated how fathers view their job of father involvement and how it affects their children's lives on many aspects such as psychological and socio-emotional growth (Chuang & Moreno, 2010). Other researchers, such as Tamis-Lemonda, Shannon, Cabrera, and Lamb (2004), have seen in studies that fathers' behaviors have been more of those of teacher, provider, and role model. Other studies found that fathers' behaviors are focusing more on family relations and childcare (Lamb, 2004; Tamis-Lamonda & Cabrera, 2002). Chuang and Moreno (2010) found that some studies noted identity attributes such as fathers' understanding of fathering based on their culture, society, or experience with their own fathers. Such studies include the following authors: Bronte-Tinkew, Carrano, and Guzman, (2006), and Pleck and Stueve, (2004).

Moreover, Bronte-Tinkew et al. (2006) found in their study of four groups—White, Black, Hispanic, and other races—fathering beliefs differ by race, ethnicity, income, and education. These four groups of fathers perceived fatherhood based on their own experiences and related factors that shaped their lives when they were young. Bronte-Tinkew et al. (2006) noticed in their study that fathers of economical disadvantaged, less educated fathers, fathers of other races, and Hispanic fathers reported that they did not believe that being a playmate, caregiver, or emotional support to their children would make a difference in child rearing. Chuang and Moreno (2010) add that regrettably there is no clear knowledge on how these beliefs

affect their level of behavior because researchers have crumpled fathering roles into one concept. To date, there seems to be a great need for more investigation on fathers' perceptions of their roles.

Parental demographics. The U.S. Census Bureau asserted that there are approximately 70.1 million fathers in the United States, and, of this number, 24.7 million fathers were part of married-couple families who had children under the age of 18 in 2011. Also, the America's Families and Living Arrangements reports that in 2011 there were 1.7 million single fathers; 10% were raising three or more children younger than the age of 18. Of these fathers, about 45% were divorced, 31% were never married, 19% were separated, and 5% were widowed (U.S. Census Bureau News, 2010).

Furthermore, the number of stay-at-home fathers in 2011 increased to an estimated number of 176,000 due to poor economy and low employment. These married fathers with children younger than 15 have remained out of the labor force for at least 1 year, primarily in order to care for the family, while their wives work outside the home (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010a). It is also reported that in the Spring of 2010, 17% of preschoolers were being cared for by their fathers while their mothers were working (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010b). Accordingly, the 2011 U.S. Census Bureau data reported that over 24 million children live apart from their biological fathers, as 1 out of every 3 (33%) children in America live with either a mother or a guardian but not their father. Also, nearly two in three (64%) African American children, one in three (34%) Hispanic children, and one in four (25%) White children live in father-absent homes (in comparison to year 1960, when only 11% of children lived in homes where the father was absent).

Maternal employment. Recent changes in cultural, educational, and legal practices have broadened women's participation in the labor force. The current number of women in the labor force has expressively increased when compared to the 1970s. The U.S. Labor of Statistics reports that in 2009, 59% of working-age women in the United States were in the labor force. While the labor force among single women increases, education for women is on the rise as well. In 1970, 22.1% of women in the civilian labor force had either attended some college or graduated with a degree. In 2010 that figure had increased to over 66.7%, as reported by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor of Statistics (2009). The large percentage of women in the labor force invites men to step up to get more involved in their children's school activities.

Many women in the workforce are single mothers who reduce employment to spend time with their children, while men rarely do so (Bianchi, 2011). Mothers are dividing their time between work and rearing children. The U.S. Census Bureau (2011) made a comparison of women's employment in 1967 to 2009, and it was noted that women in 1967 worked on average 14.8 hours per week, and in 2009 women reported that they worked 43.2 on average per week. Schneider (2011) found that mothers who live with their husbands find themselves working on average of 1.3 hours more than their husbands on gender-specific tasks and reported less leisure time than fathers (see also Allard & Janes, 2008).

Other studies show that women prefer to work part-time jobs more than full-time, as it will leave more time to tend to their children, for example, taking them to school and picking them up from school themselves. A study by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2008) examined before and after school care for children ranging from kindergarten through eighth grade, and found that 20% of those children are being transported by nonparent arrangement, while 50% have parental pickup after school (Carver, Iruka, & Chapman, 2006).

Furthermore, other studies of working mothers show that the majority of employed and unemployed women favor a part-time working schedule to be able to attend their children's school activities (Christensen 2005; Hart 2003). However part-time jobs are not often pursued even when offered (Hewlett, 2010) because of fear of losing their jobs and benefits (Galinsky et al., 2010).

In March, 2011, the U.S. Department of Labor reported that in 2008-2009, single women spent, on average, 25.4% of their annual income on shelter. Single women whose earnings were about \$5,000, which is the lowest among all the income groups, spent 49.3% of total income on food, shelter, apparel, and services. The occupation is also a factor in women's living standard. For example, the U.S. Department of Labor informs that in 2009, it was seen that women who were employed as cashiers earned an average of \$361 per week, while those women who worked as pharmacists earned a median salary of \$1,475 per week. Without a father's financial support, women's employment sometimes does not allow them the financial resources and time to best promote their children's education.

Despite the demands of the workforce, studies show that women's employment hours did not affect the amount of time they spent in child rearing; in other words, mothers tend to be all-giving and ever-available to their children (Bianchi, 2011). Blair-Loy (2003) has seen in his studies a consistent effort in mothers of high income, whose professions are very demanding, to try to spend more time with their children. Another study suggests that as the mother's employment increased, the allocation for time with children has decreased, even though young children require more attention and guidance, particularly in elementary school (Bianchi, Robinson, & Milkie, 2006). Others found in their separate studies that employment did not make

a difference in mother's involvement with their children (Bryant & Zick 1996; Ramey & Francis 2006; Sayer, Bianchi, & Robinson, 2004).

Poverty. Studies suggest that child support helps to decrease poverty in single-parent families as children receive payment immediately and directly. Comparatively, other studies that used different sources of data state that child support reduced the poverty level in female-headed households by approximately 6% to 10% (Bartfeld, 2000; Cancian, Meyer, & Park, 2003; Meyer & Hu, 1999). Furthermore, there are a large number of single-headed families who for some reason do not get child support and so their lifestyle, as well as that of their children, is limited (Cancian et al., 2003; Meyer & Hu, 1999). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2014) notes the following:

According to the census report, there was an increase in the number and proportion of custodial parents who lived below the poverty line in 2011. The report found that 4.2 million custodial parents lived in poverty in 2011, representing 29% of all custodial parents, about twice the poverty rate for the total population. (para. 1)

Another statistic added by the U.S. Census Bureau (2011) is that \$1.9 billion out of \$3.5 due was received by custodial fathers in 2009, and custodial mothers received \$19.5 out of \$31.7 billion due in child support. In contrast, while child support did improve the living standard of children of the non-resident fathers (Graham & Beller, 2002; Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan, 1997), other studies suggest that while child support payment covers financial responsibility, father-child relationship is either weak or mixed as they spend more time with their mother or other relatives.

Anderson's (1990, 1999, 2011) strain theory explains that when either parent is going through hard times, their kinship and friendship networks suffer stress by the non-ending impoverishment of the parent who has the children. Anderson explains that the strain theory examines the interactions and negotiations among the poor, which is very common in the inner

city communities. Head of household parents who live in the inner cities suffer more than other parents living in different parts of the city, as Anderson explains that the iconic ghetto economy at “ground zero” categorized as follows: work that is low-wage, no stability, and with few benefits; welfare payments, including food stamps (TANF); housing subsidies; and the low economy. He also found that there are other factors that affect the socioeconomic status of poor families living in poor communities, such as not being well informed because of the low education people possess in those communities (Anderson, 2011). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2011) informs that the TANF program is to assist needy families so that children can be cared for in the home; decrease dependency by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage; prevent unwanted pregnancies among unmarried women; and encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

Marriage, divorce, cohabitation, and extended families. In 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau data showed a delay in women entering legal marriage, and an increase in unmarried heterosexual and same-sex cohabitation. It reports that the median age for marriage rose to 28 years for men and 26 years of age for women. Bianchi (2011) found that the United States is going through a period of time when marriage is being postponed. This study also found deterioration in marriage among certain subgroups, resulting in divorces, an increase in childbearing in single parent homes, a decline in fertility, the aging population raising grandchildren, and growth in women’s labor.

Young and unmarried fathers who have children are less involved in their children’s lives than older parents, as noticed on high rates of union dissolutions, relationship instability, and multiple partner fertility (Carlson, Fustenberg, & McLahana, 2010; Meyer, Cancian, & Cook 2005). Furthermore, a study by Flouri (2006) found low frequency of biological father

interaction and low fathers' engagement in their children's lives correlated with negative impacts in children's behavior, such as hyperactivity, presumably because the child is caught between different kinds of parenting.

Single mothers. The U.S. Census Bureau (2009) reports that in 2008, the majority of custodial parents were mothers (82.2%), and about 1 in 6 (17.8%) were fathers, proportions that were not statistically different from 1994. The distribution of custodial parents by marital status differed between mothers and fathers. About 44.2% of custodial mothers were currently divorced or separated, and 36.8% had never been married. The remaining mothers consisted of 18.0% who were currently married (54.8% of whom were divorced but remarried), and 1.1% who were widowed. Custodial fathers were more likely than custodial mothers to be divorced or separated (53.5%), and were less likely to have never married (24.7%). Some fathers cohabitate with the mothers until the child is born, which makes the family fragile. Other fathers continue in the household until the child is 5 years old (Carlson & McLanahan, 2010).

Education. The educational level of custodial mothers has also increased in recent years. In 1994, 22.2% of custodial mothers had less than a high school education, and 17.1% had at least an associate's degree. By 2010, the proportion of custodial mothers who had not graduated from high school decreased to 15.0%, and the proportion with at least an associate's degree increased to 28.5%. Half (49.9%) of custodial mothers were non-Hispanic White, more than one-quarter were Black (27.2%), and 19.9% were Hispanic. Custodial fathers were more likely than custodial mothers to be non-Hispanic White (62.6%), less likely to be Black (15.9%), and the proportion who were Hispanic (17.6%) was not statistically different.

Value on equality in United States. The United States is comprised of fathers from many cultures, but certain values affect their behavior. "Contributors describe the evolution of

Confucian influences on fathers in China and Japan...the impact of Hinduism and patriarchy on fatherhood in India, and the legacy of colonialism for Southern African, Caribbean, and Brazilian fathers” (Lamb, Shwalb, & Shwalb, 2013, p. 6). In like manner, the United States was influenced by some founding principles such as core ideals of equality and freedom (McFadden, Tamis-LeMonda, & Cabrera, 2012). Due to this importance placed on equality, U.S. fathers are often expected to take half of the responsibility in the parenting process. The United Nations (2011) reports that there is unequal distribution of work between males and females. According to traditional American society, men are expected to be providers and women caretakers mainly responsible for the reproductive part of family life. However, because of the economic shift in family dynamics, fathers spend time more time in childcare, and other men are full time stay-at-home fathers, or a combination of both (McFadden & Tamis-LeMonda, 2013).

As such, fathering is considered a social arrangement. Every situation is influenced by the nature of the family, the manner in which both parents know how to parent the child, the social dynamics in which the family functions, the resources available in the community that aid the family to use human capital, as well as policy implemented in aid to the family when confronting financial hardships (Doherty et al., 1998; Marsiglio & Roy, 2012).

Cultural Groups

Ho and Hiatt-Michael (2012) provide a broader view of how families across cultures are affected by the different kinds of situations that happen in their families. Fathering is both universal and cultural, and the influence of culture on fathers has evolved over generations, centuries, and millennia. In the 20th century, some cultures have been influenced by the social-economic changes happening around the world, and so the child rearing is also affected. The researchers have not clearly differentiated cultural expectations of fathers’ involvement in their

children's school activities. Some of the possible influences are described in the sections that follow.

Vietnamese American fathers. In the Vietnamese culture, historical background has a great influence on family life, and the fluidity of social changes have shaped the notions of parenting (Jayokody, Thornton, & Axinn, 2008). The fathers were raised to be the breadwinner as a cultural norm, and spiritual power is considered to be passed down through the male line of ancestors, resulting in a strong preference for a son.

Starting in 1940s, the northern part of Vietnam placed an enormous stress on the importance of gender equality in both home and society, followed by the southern part of Vietnam in 1975. In contrast, Vietnamese fathers in United States have been shown in studies to have a hard time adjusting to different family structure such as households headed by single parents, divorce, a mother's higher income, and dual identity from U.S.-born children (Cheung & Nguyen, 2007; Nguyen-Chawkins, 1997). U.S. studies on Vietnamese fathers suggest they emphasize loyalty to traditional principles, strong parental expectations, and obedience from children to fathers as an important part of rearing children (Cheung & Nguyen, 2007). It is also noticed in the Vietnamese Parental Attitude Scale (VPAS), administered by Cheung and Nguyen (2007), that parents are concerned with their children's economic and academic future. Also, Vietnamese-American fathers show that it is important for them to show the same amount of affection to their boys and girls and to get involved in their children's academic activities.

Chinese American fathers. In order to better understand Chinese fathers, it is imperative to focus on the teachings of Confucianism that have been a major influence in Chinese fatherhood roles.

According to Confucius, the father's role is defined as *yi jia zhi zhu* (一家之主), translated as "master of the family." The father possesses a more powerful position in the

family than the mother, controlling the financial resources and making the important decisions about the family and the children. (Chuang & Moreno, 2010, p. 131)

Children of the Chinese culture are taught to bring honor to the family name. Parental respect is a center of Confucian teachings. The researchers have noted that Chinese American fatherhood has become a more contemporary style of fathering in the sense that fathers are engaged with the child, spending more time playing, being available to their child's needs, and making sure that their responsibility present in the care and rising of the child (Lamb, 2004). The shift from traditional Confucianism values to a more contemporary style may be due to the higher levels of education and income that young fathers possess. Marsiglio (1991) did a study based on the National Surveys of Families and Households and found that fathers of all cultural backgrounds with higher levels of education got engaged in their children's school activities as a form of creating a father-child relationship and to help the child to grow academically.

However, other scholars (Yeung et al., 2001) conducted a study based on the Child Development Supplement to the Panel Study of Income Dynamics and found that Chinese-American fathers spent on average 3.5 minutes less per day with their children per every \$10,000 more they earned. While researchers continue to investigate the effects of high income in their children's time, it is also important to take note of the changing dynamics in the traditional family. There are factors contributing to contemporary paradigms in rearing children and playing important roles in their lives (Capps, Bronte-Tinkew, & Horowitz, 2010).

Some scholars suggest that fathers are busier due to the dynamics of their lifestyles because more mothers are in the workforce, divorces in the family lead to father custody in some instances, and fathers are working longer hours (Lamb, Chuang, & Cabrera, 2003; Lamb & Lewis, 2004). Also, some investigators found in their studies that the increase of familial

dynamics deriving from ethnic change and cultural adjustments have prompted the government to intervene by promoting father involvement (Chuang & Moreno, 2010).

Studies on Chinese-American fathers have found that there is some level of father interaction and fathers involved in their children's education (Cabrera & Garcia-Coll, 2004; Cabrera, West, & Brooks-Gunn, 2006). In a more recent study by Capps et al. (2010), findings suggested that Chinese immigrant fathers who spoke English were involved in their children's cognitive tasks such as reading, storytelling, and singing to their children.

Indian American fathers. As in many cultures, fathers from India are seen as a powerful, reliable, and less emotional than the mothers. Fatherhood is embedded in the values of *grihastha ashrama* or the household stage that involves duties towards society, relatives, and children (Sriram & Navalkar, 2013). Through these Hindu values, Indian fathers in the United States teach that parents are responsible for forming the character of their children or there will be serious punishment in the next life. Kapoor (2000) found that fathers function more like a manager, where fathers are in charge of the material and spiritual affairs and are the final deciding authority in all family matters.

Another observation noted is that Indian fathers in the United States are less authoritarian and more child-centered (Gore & Aseltine, 2003; Saraswathi & Ganapathy, 2002; Sinha, 2003). For example, they have been noted to first guide and mentor their children and make sure that they achieve a level of success in their endeavors, followed by emphasis on a successful father-children relationship.

Hispanic fathers. The researchers have found that fathers who are from cultures other than White, can have parenting attitudes and skills according to the norms passed down from their parents, particularly immigrant men (Inman, Howard, Beaumont, & Walker, 2007; Julian,

McKenry, & McKelvey, 1994). In the case of the Hispanic or Latino fathers in the United States, researchers have noticed that there is a variation due to the heterogeneity of people and characteristics that comprise the group, such as levels of education, social-economic status, legal status, cultural beliefs and practices, language, religion, music, and perception of family arrangement (Cabrera & Garcia-Coll, 2004; Campos, 2008; Suarez-Orozco & Paez, 2002). More than 20 countries and territories whose fathers and children are residing in the United States share this mixture of qualities, though they are often described as one group.

Addressing the levels of father involvement and types of involvement in the Hispanic population has been a challenge for researchers due to the many socio-demographic factors that exist in one of the fastest growing minority groups (Capps et al., 2010). Correspondingly, the U.S. Census Bureau reports that in 2010 the Hispanic population, including people of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish origin has grown to 50.5 million or 16% compared to 35.3 or 13% from the year 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010a). Accordingly, the multi-dimensional population of fathers makes it difficult for researchers to use one particular overarching theory to measure Hispanic fatherhood (Day & Lamb, 2004).

Furthermore, researchers found that acculturation or the process of the social adjustment in Hispanic immigrant fathers can be a barrier for fathers to get involved in their children's lives (Berry, 1980; Capps et al., 2010; Gonzalez, Deardorff, Formoso, Barr, & Barrera, 2006). For example, several researchers found that fathers who immigrate to other places can find it difficult to focus their attention on their children. Hispanic men therefore employ their fatherhood roles toward work, because they may be under stress caused by new demands (Finch & Vega, 2003; Griffith & Villavicencio, 1985; Sanders & Nee, 1996). The shift to speak a new language, find employment outside their learned skills, and roadblocks to find the right services that foster

parenting skills and resources for their children can all contribute to fathers withdrawing from the family altogether (Lindahl & Malik, 1999; Shimoni, Este, & Clark, 2003).

In addition to the socio-demographic factors that may influence fathers' involvement, studies report that there is a lack of father-child interaction in infant care. For example, in a study done by Cabrera et al. (2006) it was noted that Hispanic fathers were not very involved in providing physical care or nurturing as well as capitalizing on the use of the English language. Videon (2005) also found a correlation of parent involvement based on English language proficiency. In agreement, Capps et al. (2010) mention that parent-child involvement is often associated with the spoken English proficiency (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001), which implies the willingness of adopting the host's country language as well as its norms of parenting styles. Other researchers noticed in their studies that Mexican fathers are not easily convinced to speak the English language despite pressures placed by the host country such as media portrayal of parenting styles, immigrant men changing positions, and immigration status of people of other countries (Hondagneu-Sotelo & Messner, 1994).

A more recent research done by Moreno and Chuang (2012) focus on Hispanic fathers' perceptions of school involvement and the elements that influence fathers' involvement; this study involved 40 Hispanic fathers from different regions whose children were studying at a K-6th grade elementary school. The findings of this study showed that fathers understood that their responsibilities included the need (a) to support their students in their academic activities, (b) to get more involved in the school's organizations such as volunteering and Parent Teacher Association, (c) to communicate with the teachers, and (d) to provide a suitable learning atmosphere at home. The study also showed that Hispanic fathers in general did not mention that it was their desire to participate in school committees for school communication,

volunteering, or making their voices heard. Nonetheless, fathers who had some college education or those who had skills expressed more desire to get engaged in their children's school activity. Another finding was that Hispanic fathers of low socio-economic status reported less involvement due to language barriers and limited means to attend meetings, according to Moreno and Chuang. Their study concluded that Hispanic fathers are interested in getting involved, but the levels of involvement depend on their resources.

Anglo-Saxon fathers. Cabrera, Fagan, Schadler, and Wight (2011) found in their study that Caucasian fathers tend to be warm with both girls as well as boys, using that warmth as a means of motivating their children to do better in school. Seventy percent of the Anglo-Saxon fathers say that they would like to spend more time with their children, but demanding working hours makes it more difficult. Eighty-three percent stated that they were not able to get engaged in their children's school activities because they were too busy or lacked of control of their schedule. Rogoff (1993) as well as Weisner (2002) also add that fathers ask their wives to handle their children's athletic or artistic activities until they can find more time available. It was also noted that White fathers do not do as many athletic activities as any other racial groups, as well as creative skills, and instead tend to keep busy by themselves. Anglo-Saxons placed a great importance on performing well in school, getting along with others, and carrying out their own responsibilities. They are more likely to praise their children, rarely use corporal punishment, and spend more time with their children working on projects and helping with homework.

Leavell, Tamis-LeMonda, Ruble, Zosuls, and Cabrera (2012) mention findings regarding gender regarding to father involvement in physical activities. Some fathers of boys were more physically involved with their sons through sports, whereas fathers of daughters were more likely

to be engaged in academic activities. Further, McHale, Crouter, and Whiteman (2003) mention that gender socialization is a culturally embedded process. Additionally, a number of studies done on samples of Caucasian European Americans found that most parents dress and use the color of materials for their clothing according to the gender of the child. Also, they will spend more time with children of their own gender (Harris & Morgan 1991), and they often become the child's gender model (McHale et al., 2003).

African-American fathers. A 2-year study conducted by Lu et al. (2010) noticed that African-American's father-children relationship is connected to several historical events such as slavery, decreasing employment for African-Americans, African-American women's increased participation in the labor force, and single African-American mothers shielded by welfare policies. Therefore, father's involvement must be viewed at multiple levels; their activity has been seen more present during the child's early years than in adolescence.

It was also found that there were several factors that influence child rearing such as attitudes and beliefs about parenting, high unemployment, and high incarceration rates. These factors have accelerated the increase of divorces and decrease of family formation in many urban African American communities (Lu et al., 2010). Etiological research highlighted that young adolescents living in socially deteriorating conditions such as disadvantaged neighborhoods experience increase crime rates, poor community resources, and other detrimental social conditions affecting their educational motivation and achievement (Coatsworth, Pantin, & Szapocznik, 2002; Eddy & Chamberlain, 2000; Tolan, Gorman-Smith, & Henry, 2004). Stanton et al. (2002) observed that African-American families benefit from parental monitoring of peers to help eradicate unwanted behaviors among delinquent teenagers.

Other studies suggest that interventions such as Informed Parents and Children Together that focus on teaching about HIV and other STDs helps the youth to be responsible (Dillon, Turner, Robbins, & Szapocznik, 2008; Stanton et al., 2002). Because it is unknown the ongoing accessibility fathers have with their children and the quality of time spent; it is imperative to look at the young disadvantaged father's category. These fathers might have fewer resources to have an active life with their children (Danziger & Radin, 1990; Furstenberg, 1995) as well as higher levels of emotional and behavior difficulties. Hynes, Joyner, Peters, and DeLeone (2008) explain that African-American men under the age of 25 are becoming fathers at faster rate than any other ethnic group. These men are not socioeconomically, educationally, or emotionally prepared to have children compared to men of an older age. A study by the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing (FFCW) revealed that unmarried fathers are much younger and more disadvantaged than those fathers who are married. Additionally, Carlson and McLanahan (2010) state that men who become fathers at a younger age are likely to be unhealthy, unemployed, have been in jail, and are likely to have children with multiple partners.

Despite the negative societal factors that serve as barriers and affect fathers' involvement, including education and legal issues characterizing low-income African-American males, Yeung et al.'s research indicate that middle-class African-American fathers are neither absent nor uninvolved in family life, but play essential roles within families. These African-American fathers stress family unity, stability, and adaptability. Middle-class African-American fathers are involved in their rearing of their children, maintaining friendships, interpersonal relations, and ensuring that their children are well-adjusted and motivated ("Fatherhood," 2003).

In a comparison with Caucasians, African-American, and Hispanic fathers, it was found that African American fathers and sons reported the highest degree of engagement, caregiving,

play, and visiting activities. Correspondingly, both African-American and Hispanic fathers were involved in more visiting activities compared to Caucasian fathers and sons (Cabrera et al., 2011). On the other hand, African-American fathers had very close connections with family and neighbors, which may serve as a venue to use human capital when participating in their children's school activities (Hovey & King 1996; M. Wilson, 1986) and would also help in visiting their children when they are non-resident fathers. Accordingly, Epstein's school, family and community models reveal how fathers can be encouraged to participate in their children's school activities regardless of their socioeconomic and age background.

Description of Two Parental Involvement Models

Epstein model. The parental involvement model of Joyce L. Epstein reflects that student success is dependent upon the school, parent, and the community, as they are all interrelated through the students. A large body of researchers have documented that there is a need for more research in parental involvement (Boethel, 2003; Castelli, Mendel, & Ravn, 2003; Harvard Family Research Project, 2004; Hiatt-Michael, 2010a; Patrikakaou, Weissberg, Redding, & Walberg, 2005; Sanders & Epstein, 2000; Smith, Van der Wolf, & Slegers, 2001). Furthermore, Epstein and Sanders (2000) discuss that one of the topics where more research is needed is the importance of getting the schools, families, and communities motivated to work to create successful students. The framework created by Joyce Epstein in 1981 has influenced elementary, middle, and high schools to learn more on how to involve parents in their children's school activities. For example: specific invitations to involvement from teachers and students have been identified as motivators of parental involvement in elementary school (Epstein, 1986, Kohl, Lengua, & McMahon, 2002; Simon, 2004)

Epstein's (2010) model of six types of involvement is a framework that has been useful to identify categories and practices that pertain to successful engagement such as parents with teachers, students, and community partners. This model can be used in different locations and for specific purposes that aid all stakeholders to contribute to academic achievement. The six types of involvement model has been used in research in conjunction with policies, different student populations, and many different types of communities (Epstein & Lee, 1995; Salinas & Jansorn, 2004; Simon, 2004). The six types of involvement are explained as follows:

- **Parenting:** This type of involvement refers to parents and extended family members becoming knowledgeable on child development and applying the necessary knowledge to make the home an environment of learning.
- **Communicating:** This type refers to the effective and relevant two-way communication about special school events such as parent-teacher conferences, open houses, awards ceremonies, student related reports, parent development classes, also successes or challenges in the home.
- **Volunteering:** Parent participation in school activities originated by the school, such as the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), or activities from community partnership participating in school's programs with the purpose to support schools, students, and parents. An example of such programs is the Violence Reduction Program of the Big Brothers Big Sisters.
- **Learning at home:** In this section the child's school would provide information to parents to discuss in their homes with their children. This interaction can be about school rules, grading scales, or homework expectations.

- Decision-making: The school must include family members from different backgrounds to form school committee members.
- Collaborating with the community: In this section, the school would make use of all the resources and services from the community to support school staff, students, and families to develop partnerships.

Through the use of this model, researchers have been able to identify factors of support for students to become more successful in their academic lives (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli, 1996; Como & Xu, 2003; Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001; Fan & Chen, 2001; Grolnick, Kurowski, Dunlap, & Havey, 2000; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Hiatt-Michael, 2010a; Hill & Craft, 2003; Jeynes, 2003). For example, during back-to-school-night events, teachers can start a meaningful conversation with parents to find out more about the student's behavior and/or parent's needs with a student. Along with this example, a recent call for parental involvement was made by Epstein, who said that all student should have the same opportunities and access that will aid them to be successful in school. In this context, Epstein stated that research needs to be paired with practices, and practitioners must make partnerships part of their profession. Expectations of parents at every grade level should include students' understanding of the channels of communication between home and school. For example, Benson and Benett (2005) explain that the student-led conference is one strategy that may improve student-parent relationships and lead to more successful parental participation in conferences. Further, student-led conferences may serve as means of enhancing school-to-home communication. Through research and practice, all forms of government and school organizations should work together to increase outreach to families that will lead to students' partnership involvement activities every year (Epstein, 2013).

Hoover-Dempsey model. The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997, 2005) revised model of the parental process is influenced to predict the types of parental involvement during the elementary and middle school years. This model offers a framework to examine the major sources of motivations for parental involvement. The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler model proposes three major sources that follow the path of (a) parents' involvement forms, followed by (b) home involvement, and ending with (c) school involvement. Following are the three major sources of motivation with a list of factors of motivation for parental involvement.

1. Domain 1: Parent's motivational beliefs

- Factor 1: Parental role construction. This section explains that parental beliefs about child rearing and development within the home affect children's education; furthermore, parental role development forms from the experiences they have in individual and group interactions, whether socially or academically (Biddle, 1986; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997).
- Factor 2: Parental self-efficacy. Self-efficacy suggests that parents decide to get involved in their children's education based in part on their beliefs that their involvement will bring successful outcomes (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997; Walker, Wilkins, Dallaire, Sandler, & Hoover-Dempsey, 2005).

2. Domain 2: Parents' perceptions of invitations

- Factor 1: General school invitation. This domain refers to the welcoming and responsive school environment to parents such as making sure the parents are part of the school and are well informed about their children's progress, rules, requirements, and special events.

- Factor 2: Specific teacher invitation. The specific teacher invitation factor is referred to as a motivator to parental involvement, which is highlighted as influential because it shows that teachers value parental contribution to students' academic success.
- Factor 3: Specific child invitation. The specific child invitation factor explains that parents respond to their children's invitations to their involvement. Parents can be persuaded to participate because they want their children to succeed in school, subsequently prompting motivation in parents.

3. Domain 3: Parents' perceived life context

- Factor 1: Skills and knowledge. The skills and knowledge factor suggests that the combination of skills and knowledge provide a set of personal resources that (a) theoretically influences the parents' decisions to engage in school activities and (b) allows them to apply their skills and knowledge in their specific domains of assigned activity.
- Factor 2: Time and energy. The factor of time and energy is explained as parents being influenced by daily demands on their time and energy associated with other family responsibilities and job demands. Other parents might be more involved if their responsibilities were less time and energy consuming.

The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997, 2005) model explains by its three domains the specific predictors that influence parents to participate in their children's school activities.

Selection of a model for this study. Deslandes, Epstein, Hiatt-Michael, and Moles (personal communication, September 5, 2013) concluded that the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler model would not be appropriate to use for this study due its complexity of requiring multiple in-

depth sets of data collection. The Epstein six types of parent involvement provided a more simplistic manner to describe father involvement. This model is more useful for practical application in educational settings.

Research of Father Involvement

Parent-friendly schools. The researchers have noticed that most schools have mission statements with one of the objectives being to involve the students' parents, guardians, and family members of any language and social background in an effort to create a relationship between schools, students, and parents (Weiss & Piderit, 1999). Epstein (2001) adds that in order for schools to create a favorable learning environment, they first must create an inviting setting for students to flourish academically. Furthermore, research indicates that there is an increase in parent participation when schools engage in meaningful dialogue with parents (Feuerstein, 2000). Accordingly, the Department for Education and Skills (2004) in England reported that the school environment must have a positive attitude towards fathers who are not active in their children's school activity due to their personal circumstances. It also added that there must be a clear transparent communication with fathers, mothers, students, and the community. The school must make the effort to involve the fathers through a variety of methods that focus on direct one-to-one communication with fathers such as telephone calls, text messaging, e-mailing, paper communications, and meetings specifically for fathers. Furthermore, Ho and Hiatt-Michael (2012) found in their study of Korean fathers that involvement depended of societal expectations according to Korean culture. However, nowadays, all fathers are being forced by divorce status, economic strains, more women in the workforce, and family structures to become more involved in their children's education. For these reasons, Epstein and Sanders (2000) and Simon (2000) have asserted that when schools

involve parents and these parents volunteer their time at their convenient times, the amount of parental involvement increases.

Some researchers found that parental involvement is vital, as it is the best connection and contact point between schools and the learner's home; however, some schools have sent mixed signals. For example, Greenfield, Quiroz, Rothstein-Fisch, and Trumbull (2001) and Osterling (2001) found that some schools link the cultural and linguistic characteristics of non-native English speakers as the reason for not becoming engaged in their children's school activities. In a recent study, researchers Van der Wolf and Marshall (2013) found that as a consequence of sending mixed messages, teachers and parents are moving in different directions, causing parents to not participate in their children's academic activities. Other investigations found that schools serving in urban areas often favor middle class parents, as their communication system is more suitable for middle class families (Barton, Drake, Perez, St. Louis, & Magnia, 2004). The National Clearing House for English Language Acquisition (2006) reported that from the 2005 to 2006 school year, the number of school age learners classified as English language learners students increased to more than 5 million students in the United States.

Linse (2010) suggests that since the numbers of non-English speaking natives are growing, there must be a greater effort on the part of the schools and educators to include parents of all cultural and socio-economic backgrounds to cultivate a strong relationship between fathers and their students. Linse also adds that creating a communication system can be a complex process because it can either transmit a positive, negative, or indifferent impression to parents. Therefore, it is necessary to examine through many glasses the reasons as to why not all fathers are engaged in their children's academic success.

The body of literature explaining the many reasons why fathers do not get involved in their children's academic careers is extensive. Lamb et al. (2013) highlight that due to the free market economy that exists in the United States, fathers and families compete for a better lifestyle. The researchers mention that in order for fathers to compete to give their children a desirable life style and the opportunities that America offers, they must obtain a higher education, work long hours, and arrange for childcare to be able to do so. Due to these pressures, fathers are not able to spend enough time with their children or attend to their children's school activities (Pinto & Coltrane, 2009).

A study by the National Survey of Parents reports that married couples in 2000 spent nearly 130 hours a week on market and nonmarket work combined (Bianchi et al., 2006). Since 1965 there has been an increase in working hours of approximately 10 hours per week, excluding planning schedules and organizing events (Darrah, Freeman, & English-Lueck 2007; Devault 1999). Other studies concluded that some parents responded that in order to attend to their children's activities, they needed to purchase services such as pre-made meals, childcare, and cleaning services (Bianchi et al., 2000; Stuenkel 2005). It was also mentioned that mental and physical exhaustion prevents some parents from fully participating or splitting their childcare responsibilities between spouses to maximize time with their children (Bianchi et al., 2006).

Working fathers. A study conducted by Heymann, Penrose, and Earle (2006) found that the United States does not require employers to provide paid leave, as is common in some countries. Moss and Wall (2007) and Moss and O'Brien (2006) list countries such as Finland, Germany, Iceland, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden, as well as the province of Quebec, that have extended father-care leave with high income replacement that aids parents to spend time with their children. Ochs, Shohet, Campos, and Beck (2010) found in their study that

some fathers had conflicting schedules such as their children needed to be in school when the fathers were still at work. For example, employees can work a lengthy workweek with no mandatory rest day, so fathers who work on evenings and nights are not able to get involved in their children's academics or spend much time with them.

The only comparable policy that exists in the United States is the Medical Leave Act, passed in 1993, which covers only childbirth and infant care for up to 12 weeks, but does not cover fathers' leave to spend time with their children (United Nations, 2011). States that offer paid leave to care for children could be helpful in meeting children's educational needs such as helping with homework, parent-teacher meetings, attending school events (Amato & Rivera, 1999; Christenson, Rounds, & Gomey, 1992; Comer, 1984; Fantuzzo, Davis, & Ginsberg, 1995; Griffith, 1996; McNeal, 1999; Miller & Kelley, 1991; Reynolds, 1992). The outcomes of these factors have shown to have short and long term positive effects in academic success and behavior.

Father's satisfaction. Researchers found in their studies that fatherhood brings self-satisfaction to men who are fully engaged in their children's activities. DeLuccie (1996), Lamb (1987), and Russell (1982) state that fatherhood can be an enjoyable job when they interact positively with their children (Almeida & Galambos, 1991; Coltrane, 1996; Lamb, 1997). Through their participation in their children's activities, men have the opportunity to nurture and show affection as well. Another important factor that was found in men's satisfaction is that men feel encouraged to do even more activities for their children (DeLuccie, 1996) when they see their interactions as positive. Men also become more aware of their children's development (Lamb, 1987); therefore, they gain a better understanding of their children's needs, enjoy the father-child relationship, and gain fulfillment out of fatherhood (Gronseth, 1975; Lamb, 1987;

Lamb, Pleck, & Levine, 1987). Also, fathers show more support of their children's activities when they spend longer times with their children regardless of their mood (Almeida, Wethington, & McDonald, 2001).

Father's benefits. The researchers have also found that when men have a frequent positive interaction with their children, they are more involved in their community where their children do activities (Eggebean & Knoester, 2001; Townsend, 2002; Wilcox, 2002), such as where they do service, participate in community leadership positions (Snarey, 1993), and attend church frequently (Chaves, 1991; Eggebean & Knoester, 2001; Ploch & Hastings, 1998; Stolzenberg, Blair-Loy, & Waite, 1995). Furthermore, Eggebean and Knoester (2001) found that when fathers are actively involved with their children and community activities, they also have positive relations with extended family members and have paying jobs. Similarly, Lerman and Sorensen (2000) found that there is a positive correlation between active father engagements, additional hours of paid work, and increased earnings.

Additionally, other studies conducted in father involvement, work success, and married family life found positive predictors among the three themes when men were successfully engaged in their children's lives. Cowan and Cowan (1992) found that active fatherhood is linked to marital balance. Men who live with their children and are actively engaged in their activities are more likely to have a happy marriage from 10 to 20 years after their first child was born (Snarey, 1993); correspondingly, these men have a good relationship with their family (Eggebean & Knoester, 2001). Snarey (1993) and Townsend (2002) found in their studies that fathers who are actively involved with their children tend to be good spouses, workers, and citizens.

Community support. The researchers found that when students participate in structured activities such as those organized by community leaders, churches, clubs, and businesses, this seems to increase academic and socioemotional development (Mahoney & Stattin, 2000; McHale et al., 2001). Other researchers show that it is important to investigate how participation in structured activities affects skills such as decision-making (Eccles & Barber, 1999; Mahoney & Stattin, 2000; Mahoney & Larson, 2005; Metzger, Crean, & Forbes-Jones, 2009; Metzger, Dawes, Mermelstein, & Wakschlag, 2011; O'Brien & Rollefson, 1999). Metzger et al. (2011) suggest that when parents are not involved their children's decision making process, a negative impact can be that children often make detrimental choices. On the other hand, others argue that when parents are not available, the community can help in creating programs that teach positive decision-making, so students can think of the benefits and consequences instead of making poor choices (Galotti, 2011).

In terms of ethnicity, a more recent study by Crean (2012) showed that Hispanic children participate less in sports and more in music and drama activities, despite their lack of parental guidance. The second group included was African-American, of which 70% participated in more school and neighborhood clubs than all other ethnic groups. Crean reports that the third group in the study was the Caucasian and fathers of other ethnicities. This last group participated less in music, art, and drama activities than those of African American or Hispanic ethnicities.

Invitation to fathers. As research on father involvement grows with urgency (Cassano, Adrian, Veits, & Zeman, 2006), it shows that fathers' involvement plays an important role in the development of their children (Lamb, 2004). Children's behaviors are affected by the level of father involvement in their lives (Lamb & Tamis-LeMonda, 2004). The researchers Feuerstein

(2000) and Grolnick, Benjet, Kurowski, and Apostoleris (1997) found in their studies that there is a wide range of factors that influence paternal involvement such as socioeconomic status, and teacher practices; therefore, the schools should try to make all efforts to reach out to all fathers as the reasons can be compelling enough to use strategies that are not necessary to use when involving mothers. Paralleling the increased interest in fatherhood roles is a call for men to take more responsibility in active father-child interaction (McBride et al., 2001). This call is continuously sent through all sources and multiple formats of media available (Coltrane & Allan, 1994; Furstenberg, 1995; Tamis-LeMonda & Cabrera, 1999) to persuade fathers to become more involved in raising their children (Pleck, 1997).

In the United Kingdom, fatherhood is being advertised through all sources of media available to re-structure today's fatherhood. Carpenter et al. (2006) tells that in the U.K., the government is making an effort to send a message to all fathers by displaying photographs of fathers playing with their children, fathers pushing prangs, and publishing fatherhood programs. Also, political and famous people—such as Prime Minister, Tony Blair, David Cameron, Pierce Brosnan, David Beckham, and Tony Parsons—are depicted as proactive fathers. Additionally, new sources have been produced to keep fathers more involved such as the English magazine called *FatherWork* in which political discussions, support services for fathers, and new laws that support paternal leave are published to keep fathers informed and encouraged to participate in their fatherhood duties. Another source of information that the English community has available for fathers is *The Dad Pack*, a toolkit for companies to encourage fathers to become more encouraged and celebrate their participation (Fathers Direct, 2006). Gonzalez-DeHass et al. (2005) add that although this may be true in the U.K., in the United States fathers need a lot more

support from the schools and communities where their child interacts, because the support reaches only a narrow audience restricted to certain types of activities.

Communication with fathers. The researchers in parental involvement have done studies on how the schools can contribute to improve parental involvement. One type of involvement is sending out clear and inviting communication to the parents through all forms of correspondence. Epstein (2011) explains that when the schools have a two-way communication channel open, it involves everyone in the children's school activities. Minke and Anderson (2003) adds that if the families feel welcome during parent-teacher conferences, they will inquire more about how to help their children with assignments.

Epstein (2011) suggests that school-to-home communications can include paper memos, bulletin board notices, report cards, conferences, newsletters, phone calls, e-mails, computerized messages, and websites. School-to-home communication can present challenges because not all communication might reach all family members. Several researchers state that invitations such as the ones made by school personnel can motivate parents to act upon their requests to participate (Epstein, 1986; Kohl et al., 2002; Simon, 2004). The researchers have found that specific invitations such as those made by teachers to parents to participate in their children's activities are becoming increasingly successful and effective (Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001; Hoover-Dempsey, Green, & Walker, 2007; Simon, 2004). Hiatt-Michael (2010c) states that members of different organizations can best determine ways to involve parents, specifically fathers, because they are the ones who have conflicting schedules due to work opportunities and other demands.

Educational institutions have made efforts to have high quality of interaction between schools, parents, and the community to improve academic success (Epstein et al., 2002). Green

(2003) surveyed 213 early childhood educators. The results demonstrate that efforts are being made in a number of areas to increase father involvement in the following three ways: schools studied are including the father's name on the enrollment documents; the schools are inviting fathers to participate in their children's activities; schools are sending written correspondence to all fathers, including the ones that do not live with their children.

Other researchers argue that school personnel tend to set parental involvement goals that contain meaningful intentions to interact with all parents; however, they ignore that some of those parents do not speak English and therefore are less involved in their children's school (Greenfield et al., 2001). School personnel make assumptions that parents of cultural and linguistic diversity are less involved in their children's education (Osterling, 2001). Barton et al. (2004) add that those schools that have a high population of cultural and linguistic diversity often embark on ambitious projects that are unintentionally more accommodating to the middle class school population. Also, many times urban schools serving poverty-level populations create parental involvement plans without taking into account the students' parents multifaceted needs such as working long hours to support their students. These schools' programs are not inclusive because they are intended to invite middle class parents whose needs are different than those of low-income families (Linse, 2010). Accordingly, Linse (2010) has created a taxonomy that can be used as a baseline to plan both short-term and long-term events to involve fathers or the entire family of English language learner students. See appendix A for list of programs to support father involvement.

The researchers, Bjorklund, Younger, and Pelligrini (2002) and Shonkoff and Phillips (2000) state that the first years of children's lives are the most important because they contribute to growth and development. With this in mind, the researchers Custodero, Britto, and Brooks-

Gunn (2003) conducted a study in which they surveyed 2,000 families with children aged birth to preschool-age. The focus of Gunn's study was to find out how U.S. parental engagement using music varies depending on the socioeconomics and parental characteristics. The parents who had high school graduation or more added up to 62% of the surveyed parents and reported playing or singing to their children daily. Parents with the least education were 32% of the parents and reported to playing or singing to their children weekly.

Ho and Hiatt-Michael (2012) brought together studies regarding fathers' engagement in their children's education across countries. One of the studies by Karsli and Allexsaht-Snider (2012), "A Cross-Cultural Perspective on Father Involvement in Early Childhood Education: Turkey and the United States," focused on a program named the Mother Child Education Foundation's Father Education Program created by the Ministry of Education. This program functions at a national level with the purpose to educate and involve all fathers in Turkey. The seminars are brought to fathers where they traditionally meet for coffee during their free time, which setting provides convenience and opportunity for fathers to network with other fathers in their communities. This study reports that fathers are showing great interest in the program. Also, the Turkish Ministry is training teachers on how to involve the students' fathers in their children's education and incorporate important issues such as teaching fathers to be respectful of children's rights. Karsli and Allexsaht-Snider also report that that Turkey is using all sources of media to promote the importance of fatherhood. In the United States many organizations and programs have been set up to bring those that are less active fathers in an effort to engage men in their children's activities.

Fagan and Palm (2004) argue that it is essential to include fathers of all walks of life by creating programs that highlight the importance of the father's participation and addressing their

needs as fathers. For example, the National Resource Center on Children and Families of the Incarcerated and the Family and Corrections Network are initiatives that are continuously working toward creating fatherhood programs to involve imprisoned fathers in their children's lives (Grantmakers for Children, Youth, and Families, n.d.). Smith and Morote (2011) highlight the urgency to involve fathers in programs that bring interaction between the father and the child in regards to discipline. The Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriation Bill, Senate Report 106-404 (2001) reports that children of incarcerated parents are six times more likely than other children to be incarcerated at some point in their lives. More specifically, Harrison and Beck (2006) reports that based on the Bureau of Justice (as cited in Harrison & Beck, 2006) statistics survey on incarcerated parents, one can estimate a total of 2,000,000 minor children with parents in prison. The Center for Children of Incarcerated Parents (2006) estimates there are 2.8 million minor children with incarcerated parents in prisons and jails. For this reason, the Department of Education has funded programs to involve these fathers.

Schools and programs for fathers. The National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse, under the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services has listed programs to support father involvement in schools, childcare centers, and communities across the country. The example of programs is attached in Appendix A. Along with the mentioned programs, the *Million Father March* based in Chicago, Illinois, is involving fathers across America through the programs where fathers volunteer to help in classrooms.

What is the Community Doing to Involve Fathers?

The sixth of Epstein's (2011) types of school, family, and community partnerships states that when the schools collaborate with the community, they improve their curriculum and

environment. Schools and communities bring crucial parental involvement when they partner because community organizations can help with programs in health, skills improvement, and enhance talents of family members. Epstein adds the following statement to schools and communities:

Collaborating with the community activities bring extra human, fiscal, and physical resources, programs, and services from the community to the school. Connections with small and large businesses; government agencies; cultural, religious, civic, and fraternal organizations; colleges and universities; and other community groups, and individuals should benefit students, families, or the school. (p. 459)

Epstein (2011) offers suggestions on how to find community partners to improve parental involvement in school. Creating a community portrait that includes teachers,' students,' and families' surroundings can help to identify the resources around the neighborhood of the school. It is important to take into account all that have a stake in the quality of education. An example of community resources is the Black Star Project described in the next section.

Community projects. The Black Star Project (2010) was founded in 1996 to improve the quality of life in the Black American and Hispanic communities of Chicago by eliminating the racial academic achievement gap. The Black Star Project's multiple initiatives address parent development, student engagement, and educational advocacy. Upon its founding in 1996, two programs were introduced that are now in their 14th year. The Student Motivation Program was designed to inspire students to do well in school through classroom-based mentoring. The Barbara Ann Sizemore Communiversity for Educational Excellence is a series of community meetings designed to generate a public arena for full community dialogue leading to advocacy on a variety of issues concerning closing the academic achievement gap. In 2004, the first annual *Million Father March* was launched as a nationwide event to mobilize Black fathers and male caregivers to take their children to school on the first day. That same year, the Black Star Project

implemented Parent University, designed to equip parents with the necessary skills, resources, and information to build stronger families and ensure the proper education of their children.

Fathers Club was also born that year, hosting free educational and recreational outings for fathers and significant male caregivers and their children while encouraging men to work for educational and other positive changes in their communities.

Currently, the Million Father March is helping schools across the nation to create programs that help both the child and the father to have a strong father-child relationship. These programs start the first day of school and ask fathers to take their children to school, sign a pledge to be a good father at the school, and commit to volunteer 10 hours during the 2013-2014 academic school year. Also, through the Million Father March 2013, fathers are being asked to volunteer as safety patrollers, mentors, tutors, field-trip chaperones, sport coaches, teacher assistants, parents' associations members, hall and lunchroom monitors, readers to young children, and be part of fathers' clubs to network with other fathers. Other community programs include the California State Parent Teacher Association, which has, as part of the program's vision, to involve parents in their children's education.

PTA encouragement. The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) encourages fathers to get involved in their children's activities and development. It states the following to encourage fathers: "Parents are not only their children's first teachers, they are probably the most important teachers their children will ever have" (O'Shea, 2008, p. 1). Fathers have the opportunity to get involved in activities brought by the PTA to schools. The California State PTA provides toolkits to fathers or caregivers to enrich parent involvement, in schools and organizations around the country.

The PTA's activity list has ideas that can turn into great opportunities for dads and father figures to maintain a strong child-father relationship and use the school's resources to learn how to help the child to do school work. PTA also adds that family involvement fosters student's academic success, and students who have involved parents earn higher grades, attend school regularly, and more likely will attend college. Also, when the community and family work together, student achievement improves, teachers' morale rise, communication increases, and family, school, and community connections multiply (National PTA, n.d.).

Summary

The literature reviewed in this chapter described the historical, theoretical, and empirical background in regards to the facts that influence paternal involvement in their children's education. Some of the factors that can positively influence parental involvement include changes in home lives of fathers and mothers, cultural groups, research on parent involvement, and knowledge of what the schools and community are doing now to foster father involvement. The knowledge grasped from reviewing literature on father involvement will present the opportunity to expand Epstein's framework that can be used to increase the body of knowledge in effective and meaningful father engagement in their children's education. Because parental involvement factors are broad, it is helpful to investigate them through an exploratory study such as this case study at GWS.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Overview

This chapter focuses on the methodology of this case study and it is organized in the following manner: research design, description of school, population, data collection, field notes, limitations, and data analysis. This case study used a mixed-methods approach through the collection of quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell, 2009). The following research questions and hypotheses guided this case study:

- RQ1: How do fathers perceive that they are involved in their child's education in the areas of Epstein's six typologies?
- RQ2: How do mothers perceive that fathers are involved in their child's education in the areas of Epstein's six typologies?
- H1: Significant differences exist between fathers' and mothers' perceptions of fathers' involvement in the areas of Epstein's six typologies.
- H2: A significant difference exists between fathers' perceptions of their involvement and their employment status.
- H3: A significant difference exists between fathers' perceptions of their involvement and level of education of fathers.
- RQ3: How do fathers explain their involvement in their children's education?
- RQ4: What are the perceptions of site administrators and teachers regarding fathers' involvement in their children's education?

Research Design and Rationale

Mixed methods. The researcher used a mixed method case study approach for data collection by surveys of fathers and mothers; face-to-face long interviews from fathers, administrators, and teachers; and collection of field notes during school visits. Because research on the topic of father engagement is fairly new to the field of family-school-community partnerships, the researcher conducted a study in a typical suburban middle-class school with a diverse population, as this would be more useful and more generalizable to other schools. Prior studies, as noted by Ho and Hiatt-Michael (2012), have been completed within particular regions and populations. Ho and Hiatt-Michael recommended an in-depth case study of one site and stated that such a study would reveal findings regarding the diversity of father engagement within a given population of a school.

Yin (2003) states that the term *mixed methods* refers to both data collection techniques and analyses. Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner (2007) describe the mixed methods research design and approach as follows:

Mixed methods research is the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative approaches (e.g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques for the purpose of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration). (p. 123)

The use of mixed methods research design used has become increasingly common in studies, as the researcher combines both approaches to provide a more ample investigation (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Furthermore, Caracelli and Greene (1993) examined 57 mixed methods studies and identified the following five purposes for using a mixed methods designs:

(a) triangulation or convergence, (b) complementarity or examining different faces of a phenomenon, (c) initiation or finding paradoxes, (d) development using sequence, and

(e) expansion of breadth and scope. Yin (2003) explains that these elements are intertwined in the mixed methods design and aids the researcher to obtain valid and reliable results.

This case study applied mixed-methods through the use of surveys to fathers, surveys to mothers, face-to-face long interviews of fathers, face-to-face long interviews of administrators and teachers, and field notes about observations made at the school site. As stated by Stake (2005), mixed-method design promotes “credibility by thoroughly triangulating the descriptions and interpretations, not just in a single step but continuously throughout the period of study” (pp. 443-444). Triangulation and credibility will be discussed further in subsequent sections.

Instrumental case study design. Researchers describe the instrumental case study design as the in depth study of a chosen issue that is affecting a setting or context existing in a bounded system (Creswell, 2009; Stake, 2005). Stake (1998) states that for a single instrumental case study, the researcher focuses attention on a specific issue or concern and then chooses one bounded case to illustrate the issue or concern. Furthermore, Creswell (2007) defines a case study as follows: “Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system...over time, through detail, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual materials, and documents and reports)” (p. 73). Moreover, other scholars describe the case study format as an approach of inquiry, a methodology, or a comprehensive research strategy (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2011). The case study design is commonly used in an educational setting to investigate social issues or concerns (Merriam, 1998; Mertens, 2005). Because it brings to the reader a naturalistic vicarious experience (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), it is easy to understand the study. Additionally, Merriam (1998) explains that a case study should be built with the intention to provide clear understanding of the results and use them to clarify the issue.

Merriam (1998) emphasizes the importance of exercising caution by “delimiting the object of study” (p. 27) when describing a case study. The researcher must organize the case study around the set of boundaries. More specifically, a case study must specify what will be studied and what will not be. Stake (2005) indicates that a meaningful and applicable study is one that focuses on a unique and specific issue or concern. In this case, research at a single school site focused on the issue of father’s engagement to provide what Creswell (2007) calls *purposeful maximal sampling*. Epstein (2001) suggests to educators to know and practice the skills learned to involve parents. She also adds that 21st century educators must learn and expand on the updated research as it helps parents to develop themselves, their families, and the community. The need for an in-depth study in paternal involvement at such site is due to the limited amount of research done on this topic in a middle-class school K-6 school urban setting with a multicultural population.

Triangulation of data sources. In order to investigate the issue of how fathers get involved in their children’s education, the researcher triangulated the data collected from surveys, interviews, and field notes. Denzin (1978) defined triangulation as follows: “The combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon” (p. 291). McMillan and Schumacher (2010) explain that mixed methods increases reliability if it is used to triangulate the data from the various methods. They remark that “to the extent that the results from each method converge and indicate the same result... [this design affords] greater credibility in the findings” (p. 26). In addition, several researchers affirm that triangulation improves the trustworthiness of findings to the case study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Johnson & Turner, 2003; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Stake, 2005). Social researchers recommend exploring an issue of concern with close attention in order to

obtain correct and useful findings. Berliner (2002) cautions researchers that issues of social science such as an educational concern must be handled with care and using the appropriate methods to get the most meaningful and useful results. In recent years, the Department of Education has confused and mishandled years of research findings in studies done in education, so the context of findings must be emphasized to ensure that results are not misapplied to contexts in which they are not necessarily applicable.

To exercise caution, this study employed a case study design using triangulation across all instruments used for data collection. For this reason, the researcher examined the issue of father engagement in their children's school-based lives, which requires a design such as the case study for in-depth meaning to emerge. Accordingly, the researcher applied insights learned in the literature review about father engagement in their children's education (see Chapter 2) to guide instrument design for a thorough investigation. Also, the researcher utilized a triangulation technique of employing multiple reviewers after the data of surveys, interviews, and field notes were collected to ensure that the element of inter-coder reliability was present.

Description of the School

The researcher secured a site to observe as a case study according to the following factors. First, these factors include site alignment with the research topic (i.e., the desire for more father involvement), typical school demographics, willingness of staff to facilitate the research, relevant presentation of a recent real-life phenomenon to be studied, and most importantly, learning opportunities for the stakeholders must be present (Stake, 1998).

The researcher noted the physical appearance of the school as follows: The front office personnel were working with all students and ensuring that all parents who came through their

doors were given proper and timely service. The school seemed to have an efficient, calm environment.

Demographically, GWS is described as follows: the student population is 1025 students; 46.4% Caucasian, 28% Hispanic, 14% African American, 4% Filipino, 4.7% Asian, 1% American Indian, and 0.6% Pacific Islander. The GWS population also contains 7% students with disabilities. Approximately 21% of all students at GWS participate in the National School Lunch program. The faculty of GWS includes 34 regular education teachers, four special day class (SDC) teachers, one speech teacher, one resource specialist, and 36 classified personnel.

GWS also operates under a Single Plan for Student Achievement, by which needs are served for English Language Learners (ELL), Gifted and Talented Education (GATE), and Special Education. Special Education services are comprised of Speech, Resource Specialist Program (RSP), and Special Day Class (SDC) program.

Population and Sample

The population under this study was the fathers, mothers, administrators, and teachers of the GWS. The researcher distributed surveys to fathers and to mothers of GWS who attended a PTA event on November 20, 2013. The total number of participants who filled out a survey was 244. These respondents may or may not have been related, as some were in pairs and others were not. The mother's survey was yellow color that contained 32 items, and the fathers' surveys were white color that contained 43 items. The total number of surveyed participants represented 23.8% of GWS parents' population. The largest number of respondents by group was represented by mothers, who filled out 132 surveys. The second group of respondents was composed of fathers who turned in 112 surveys. A total of 56 surveys were not completed by either group.

There were three groups of interviewees. The first group was composed of 16 GWS fathers, the second group was made up of administrators, and the third group included teachers from GWS. The researcher obtained a list provided by the school secretary of five fathers from each grade level including SDC that represented the ethnic make-up of GWS to assure an unbiased selection of participants. Using this list, researcher made three attempts to reach each father via telephone to offer the opportunity to be interviewed. If the father did not respond after three attempts, the next father on the list was called. When a father responded, the researcher explained the reason for her call and asked if he would be willing to participate in a voluntary interview. If the father's answer was "yes," the researcher emailed him the Interview Informed Consent Letter (see Appendix H) and the Fathers' Interview Questions (see Appendix K). Each father was given 2 weeks to respond, and then an interview was set up at the father's time and place of convenience. Fathers who agreed to be interviewed were met at a local bookstore after their working hours. Each interview was given pre-assigned codes F1 through F16 for data organization.

The second group was composed of two administrators listed with pre-assigned codes A1 and A2. The third group was composed of eight teachers with pre-assigned codes of T1 through T8. Similar protocol as the fathers was followed, the school secretary provided a list of thirty-five teachers from which list each teacher was contacted three times, if he or she would respond and was willing to give a voluntary interview, researcher sent Interview Informed Consent Letter (see Appendix H) along with Administrators' and Teachers' Interview Questions (see Appendix L) via email. If willing participants responded "yes", then researcher set up an appointment at their convenient time and place. Some of these school personnel agreed to be interviewed at the

GWS conference room and others in their classrooms. A total of 26 interviews were completed between the dates of December 4, 2013 through January 14, 2014.

Protection of Human Subjects

Permissions from the study site. Permission was received by the Pepperdine University IRB prior to data collection (see Appendix D). Before contacting prospective participants, the researcher requested and obtained written permission from the head of the school to conduct this study at GWS (see Appendix E and F).

Participant consent for surveys. During the consent process, survey participants were informed through the Survey Informed Consent Letter of the purpose of the study and their rights (see Appendix G). They were asked not to write down any family or personal names as each survey contained pre-coded identifiers consisting of a letter and two numbers such as F01, F02, et cetera for fathers, and M01, M02, et cetera for mothers. They were informed of the data protection measures that would be followed, as described in detail in a subsequent section. Survey Informed Consent Letters were removed from surveys and shredded for identity protection.

Participant consent for interviews. As part of the protocol, the researcher sent the Interview Informed Consent Letter (see Appendix H) via e-mail to participants prior to their agreement to participate in an interview. This consent introduced the researcher, the dissertation chairperson, and purpose of this study. It stated that participation in the interview is strictly voluntary and that the interview would take from 30 to 40 minutes approximately. It also included the reason for the request to be part of this study and that the interview was either face-to-face or by telephone at a convenient time and place for the interviewee. It also contained a statement of recording the interview and transcription by a professional transcriber using a

Microsoft Word document. Also, participants were informed that any data collected for the purpose of this study would be used as primary source of data to gain knowledge in the following manner: (a) insights in which ways fathers are involved in their children's education; (b) perceptions of fathers involvement in their children's education; (c) what activities do school personnel utilize to engage fathers; (d) activities offered at this school to involve fathers; and (e) the perceptions of administrators and teachers about father involvement.

The researcher also added that she would not disclose any data provided for research purposes nor would data be linked to participant's identity. This would prevent any risk of criminal or civil liability or damage to his or her financial status, employability, or reputation. No deception would be used in any manner. The Interview Informed Consent Letter (Appendix H) also specified that the potential risks in the study were considered minimal. In the event that any participant might experience fatigue or need to take a short break, one would be granted. Also, the participant would be able to cancel or reschedule the interview at any point before or during the interview, without any repercussions of any type. Also, participants were informed of the right to refuse to answer any question or even to withdraw from the study after the interview. Any information gathered from the participation of respondent would not be released to anyone without permission, and the researcher would not publish any identifying information. This consent form listed how and where the researcher could be reached if there were any questions regarding the study procedures or Internal Review Board regulations at Pepperdine University. The Interview Informed Consent Letter (see Appendix H) clarified that possible benefits would include a beverage and a snack.

Internal Review Board permission. The researcher submitted a letter an exempt review application to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) in which application explained the following

rationale for exempt review status: The data gathering posed minimal risk of physical and emotional harm to fathers, mothers, administrators, and teachers of GWS. The official letter of approval was received and dated November 19, 2013. This document approved that the data collection proposal adhered to the guidelines of Pepperdine's IRB exempt status. Participant informed consent procedures described in prior sections and the precautions for anonymity and confidentiality described in the subsequent sections were approved by the IRB. Therefore this study started on November 20, 2013.

Anonymity for survey responses. The American Anthropological Association (as cited in Glesne & Peshkin, 1992) states that using codes to identify participants is part of appropriate research practice. Specifically the researcher did the following: assigned codes of letters and numbers to interviewees to identify responses, removed any names of participants on any redacting items or sheets found in archival data, ensured proper locking and storing of consent forms and data collected, followed protocols as described, used data for the solely purpose of this study. As note previously, the researcher informed participants not to write any family names as there were pre-assigned codes to help code the data. The assigned pre-coded numbers consisted of a letter and number such as F1, F2, etc. for fathers, A1, A2, for administrators, and T1, T2 for teachers.

Survey participants were asked not to write down any family names as each survey contained pre-coded number consisting of a letter and two numbers such as F01, F02, etc. for fathers, and M01, M02 for mothers. They were informed that the codes would be electronically deleted and/or shredded as soon as the data collection had been completed and before the data was coded. For this reason, codes were deleted from every survey collected before data analysis.

Confidentiality for interview participants. On beginning the interview, the researcher asked for permission to turn on the tape recorder and to take notes. She also explained that the interview and recording can be stopped at any time that interviewee desired without any penalty or judgment. These interviews did not ask for information that would directly identify the participant, nor could identifiers be used to link the participant with his or her data. The researcher kept the interviews and audio recording secure, as described in the following section on data storage precautions. These were transcribed professionally by a professional transcriber into a Microsoft Word document. Were confidentiality to be breached unintentionally, this study presented no more than a minimal risk to the participants. Raw data identified only by codes was shared by the researcher only with the transcriptionist, data coders, and dissertation committee members.

Data storage precautions. Hall and Feltner (2005) state that any information disclosed to a researcher must not be exposed and should be kept private for the use of the study. Accordingly, the researcher exercised confidentiality and anonymity to protect participant's responses. After the interviews were conducted, the researcher electronically deleted codes and recordings. Professional transcripts were stored in the researcher's file cabinet located in her house for a period of 5 years from the creation date. Also, all electronic information stored will be kept in the researcher's computer and password-safe flash drive and will be destroyed 5 years after the creation date. Additionally, any written records collected from participants are kept in a locked file cabinet in the researcher's home. Paper records will be destroyed and shredded after 5 years from the creation date.

Instruments

Development of fathers' and mothers' surveys. The researcher constructed a survey to distribute to each of the two groups of participants: fathers' surveys (see Appendix I) and mothers' surveys (see Appendix J). These surveys were designed to be read in English only, as GWS enrolls six percent of Hispanic English Language Learners (ELL), which is the largest ethnic group in the school. Furthermore, R. Lots (personal communication, September 26, 2013) stated that according to the California Department of Education, EC Section 48985 (c) of Bill 680, GWS is not required to translate any form of communication in English if parents of the English Language Learner student body comprise less than 15% of the school's population .

The survey questions were written based on Joyce Epstein's six typologies: (a) parenting, (b) communicating, (c) volunteering, (d) learning at home, (e) decision-making, and (f) collaborating with the community. The researcher took the constructed survey instruments to a panel of senior researchers at the ERNAPE, 9th Annual Conference in Lisbon, Portugal in September, 2013. The researchers who reviewed these questions were Raquel Amaya Martinez-Gonzalez, Rolande Deslandes, Joyce Epstein, Diana Hiatt-Michael, and Oliver Moles. The instruments revised by the panel of experts were used to gain insights of the key elements reasons of father involvement.

Later, these instruments were pilot-tested with a group comprised of 5 teachers, 3 para-professionals, 5 parents, and a doctoral student who served as a moderator. This group met for 1 hour in a comfortable conference room located in the GWS campus. The purpose of this meeting was to refine the structure of questions and to review procedures for clear understanding. This pilot group made more revisions and approved the instruments for clarity (Sampson, 2004; Yin, 2003). This meeting allowed all pilot participants to share their

constructive criticism and provide their ideas to improve the survey questions. During this meeting, the group wrote down revisions of the proposed questions. At the end of the meeting, the researcher used the suggestions to revise the survey questions.

The surveys were primarily designed to answer the first two of the research questions. The survey was also used to (a) describe demographic characteristics and (b) compare demographic data with survey responses to test Hypotheses 2 and 3.

Research Question 1 asked: How do fathers perceive that they are involved in their child's education by Epstein's six typologies? This question was primarily answered through father's survey (see Appendix I). According to Epstein's (2010) model, there are three major types of context where the child learn and grows: (a) the family, (b) the school, and (c) the community. These three groups influence each other with their actions and interactions between the stakeholders in each sphere. For example, the student's academic achievement is driven by the similarities and differences in the school's practices, family cultural customs, and values of the community. Therefore, this survey employed this model to learn the ways in which fathers were involved in their children education and how the school and community fostered their engagement.

Research Question 2 asked: How do mothers perceive that fathers are involved in their child's education by Epstein's six typologies? This question was primarily answered through mothers' surveys (see Appendix J) that provided their perception of paternal involvement in their children's education.

Hypothesis 1 posited: Significant differences exist between fathers' and mothers' perceptions of fathers' involvement in the areas of Epstein's six typologies. The father and mother responses on the same survey items were compared. Because the wording and scale

anchors matched between the fathers' and mothers' surveys, a quantitative comparison was possible.

Fathers' interviews. The interview instruments were used to gain insights the key elements reasons of father involvement to answer questions three and four of this study. Research Question 3 asked: How do fathers explain their involvement in their child's education? This question was primarily answered by fathers' interviews (see Appendix I). The interview questions were driven by Epstein's (2011) overlapping spheres and framework of six types of involvement. These instruments contained seven open-ended semi-structured questions to answer paternal involvement at GWS. Leech (2002) explains why semi-structure questions can be useful by saying the following: "Semi-structured interview questions allow the respondents the chance to be the experts and to inform the research" (p. 668). With an open-ended question format, the fathers had flexibility to answer the questions as it is experienced in their homes with their children. Janesick (1998) explains that running a pilot study allows the investigator to test the design of the investigation, interview questions, and create effective communication structures. Yin (2003) states, "Interview is a powerful method of data collection...It provides the opportunity to ask for clarification if an answer is vague or provide clarification if a question is not clear" (p. 102).

Administrators' and teachers' interviews. The second group that was interviewed were the administrators and teachers of the GWS. Their interview instrument contained six questions (see Appendix L). This group was selected in the effort to try to answer Research Question 4 asked: What are the perceptions of site administrators and teachers regarding father involvement in their child's education? The questions in this instrument are based on Epstein's (2001) model of overlapping spheres and framework of six types of involvement.

Data Collection Procedures

As noted previously, before any data gathering, the school principal at GWS granted permission for the study (see Appendix F). The data collection process is described as follows:

Paternal and maternal surveys. The data collection procedure was done in the following manner: The survey questionnaires were distributed to all fathers and mothers at a Parent Teacher Association (PTA) movie-dinner event that took place in November 20, 2013 at GWS. The researcher used the community and multipurpose rooms to prevent mothers and fathers from influencing each other's responses during the completion of the survey. These two rooms were equipped with lighting, air conditioning, enough comfortable seats, drinking water, and a restroom by the exit door. The researcher chose these rooms because they were suitable according to the number of mothers and fathers expected to attend this event. The number of fathers and mothers that are expected to attend the movie-dinner event were approximately 300, plus four volunteers from PTA. Two volunteers from the PTA helped out in each room at this event. The fathers' and mothers' survey completion procedures are described as follows:

1. Before the PTA movie-dinner event, the researcher and PTA volunteers noticed that the language spoken among the parents was English, as only six percent of GWS's student body is ELLs. Therefore, English was used for the meeting and instructions with both groups of fathers and mothers. GWS parents were asked if they wanted to participate in a 10-minute survey regarding their perceptions about father involvement in their children's education. Those parents that agreed were asked to move to different rooms designated for fathers and mothers for the purpose of preventing their influencing each other's responses.

2. The researcher instructed fathers to go to into the community room and mothers stayed in the multipurpose room with their children.
3. Fathers and mothers were asked to be seated for about 5-10 minutes to take a survey regarding the ways in which the fathers are involved in their children's education. The following were distributed:
 - Informed Consent Letter (see Appendix G) attached to surveys;
 - Fathers Survey with semi-structure questions (see Appendix I) in white color paper and contained pre-assigned code on the upper-right hand corner;
 - Mothers' Survey with semi-structure questions (see Appendix J) in yellow color paper and contained pre-assigned code on the upper-right hand corner.
4. Two PTA volunteers assisted the researcher to read aloud the Survey Informed Consent Letter in each room (see Appendix G).
5. PTA volunteers asked the fathers and mothers groups to answer the survey and distributed pencils and surveys. The researcher divided her time between the rooms to ensure that procedures were being followed properly.
6. One PTA volunteer walked around the room to collect the completed surveys, thanked the willing participants, and directed them to reunite with their families in the multipurpose room.

Interview procedures. The researcher interviewed the following participant groups: 16 GWS fathers and 10 school personnel (two administrators and eight teachers). The first group of participants consisted of 16 randomly selected fathers; two fathers from each grade level (K-6th and SDC) to represent overall the cultural make-up of the school. The second group consisted of

two administrators and eight teachers, with at least one teacher from each grade level such as K-6th and SDC to represent the personnel of the school.

Once the Interview Informed Consent Letter was signed by each willing participant (see Appendix H), the researcher explained the protocol guidelines as stated on the letter. Then the researcher started the interview by explaining that the interview would last 30 to 40 minutes. The researcher asked for permission to turn on the tape recorder and to take notes. When each interview was completed, the researcher thanked him or her and stated that if there should be any further comments to contact the researcher at the numbers provided.

The researcher attached an Interview Informed Consent Letter (see Appendix H) to each interview questionnaire, and each questionnaire had a pre-assigned code for classification purpose during data analysis. Therefore, each participant was not asked to provide his or her name at any time during the interview. Each interviewee was given a pre-assigned code formed of a letter and a number. Fathers' interviews were given code numbers starting from F1 through F16. Administrators' interviews assigned the codes of A1 and A2, and teachers' interviews were assigned the codes of T1 through T8. These codes helped the researcher to classify the data according to the respondent's position. Later, the pre-assigned codes were electronically deleted from the master code sheet.

Father's interviews. The researcher contacted the potentially participating fathers by telephone and by e-mail to set up a time to interview in person. The researcher discussed with each father a convenient time and place to meet in person. In three instances the researcher attempted to contact a father on the list twice by telephone and twice by e-mail before reaching him. Once they agreed to interview, the researcher e-mailed the Interview Informed Consent Letter (Appendix H) 2 weeks prior to the interview to allow time to review its specifications

regarding the principles of human subjects protection. Once the Interview Informed Consent Letter was signed by each willing participant, the researcher went over the protocol guidelines as stated on the consent letter. Before the interview started, researcher noticed that six participants were from different nationalities but spoke English; therefore, the interviews were conducted in the English language. Then the researcher started the interview by informing the participant that the interview would take 30-40 minutes. She also asked for permission to turn on the tape recorder and took notes during the interview. The researcher explained that the interview and recording could be stopped at any time without any penalty or judgment; also, the interview instruments for fathers would contain six questions. These questions provided insights regarding fathers' involvement in their children's education. After each interview was completed, the researcher thanked the interviewee and informed him that he could add further comments by contacting the researcher at the given phone number and e-mail.

Administrators' and teachers' interviews. The second group that was interviewed were the administrators and teachers of the GWS (see Appendix L). Administrators and teachers were informed that they could be interviewed at their choice of a convenient time and place. The researcher made herself available to visit the participants' classrooms, conference room, or use the researcher's house to conduct interviews, to accommodate the preference of the interviewee. The interview procedures were the same as those described in the prior section.

Notes on school-site observations. The researcher compiled field notes and ordered them in chronological order from 1/25/2013 through 1/14/2014, a total of 13 days. During the school visits the researcher took notes of school environment, physical presence of fathers in the school, school staff customer service manners, and collected artifacts that reflected father involvement or invitation to school activities, constituting "a wide range of written, visual,

digital, and physical material relevant to the study at hand” (Merriam, 2009, p. 139). Others define as artifacts as “symbolic materials such as writing and signs and non-symbolic materials such as tools and furnishings” (LeCompte, Preissle, & Tesch, 1993, p. 216). Accordingly, the researcher gathered notes of any physical evidence or traces, as recommended by methods theorists (Lee, 2000; Webb, Campbell, Schwartz, & Sechrest, 2000). Creswell (2007) suggests that field notes be organized by date for cohesiveness. Accordingly, the researcher carried around a small book where she recorded quick notes and sorted them by date, highlighting pertinent information that was later connected to interview and survey data. All artifacts such as flyers and notices sent home were written in the English language as the school’s ELL declared school body is only six percent; therefore, GWS is not required to translate any information sent home in another language other than English per EC Section 48985 (c) of the California Department of Education Bill 680 (R. Lots, personal communication, September 26, 2013).

Validity and Reliability

Merriam (2009) mentions that validity and reliability must be present in any kind of research, whether qualitative or quantitative. Firestone (1987) explains the following: “the quantitative study portrays a world of variables and static states. By contrast, the qualitative study describes people acting in events” (p. 19). Accordingly, this study used mixed methods as an attempt to assess more accurately the internal and external validity of the study.

The researcher also used the strategy referred to as *peer review*. This strategy is explained by Creswell (2009) as “an external check of the research process” (p. 208). Peers heard the accounts of the researcher and they asked questions about methods, meanings, and interpretations to add varied perspectives and prevent bias. The researcher kept written accounts

of the peer debriefing sessions. These validity points served to maintain trustworthiness and reliability of the research.

The reliability aspect of this case study is as described by Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) as follows: “Reliability is the degree to which the results of a measurement accurately represent the true “magnitude” or “quality” of a construct” (p. 82). Other researchers simplify the latter statement by saying, “Another way to conceptualize reliability is that it is the extent to which measures are free from error” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 179). Further, this study followed Lincoln’s and Gubba’s (1985) four criteria to determine reliability of an inquiry. These criteria are as follows:

1. Prolonged engagement: long interview and multiple visits to spend time at the site to build trust with respondents.
2. Persistent observation: multiple visits for various interviews
3. Peer debriefing; and
4. Analytical sessions to explore aspects aimed at probing biases and clarifying interpretations.

Through the exercise of following the above-mentioned strategies, this case study demonstrated reliability as the data collection procedures could be repeated and obtained the same results. Yin (2003) explains that there is reliability when the researcher follows the case study protocol appropriately and documents procedures clearly.

Coders. After the data were collected, six doctoral students colleagues were secured to assist in the coding of the interview and field notes data “to provide corroborating evidence” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2010, p. 208). All six coders were Pepperdine University students, and three of them had already completed their dissertations using the Powell and Renner (2003) five-

step data coding process. To ensure validity and reliability of this research, the researcher trained all six coders using the five-step process. Further, with the exception of the investigator, the coders were uninvolved in the elementary school setting and were not expected to have any biases in regard to the research questions.

The researcher gave each coder four transcripts, providing the opportunity for each transcript to be coded twice and then read by researcher for an inter-rater reliability check. In addition, the researcher coded two transcripts and supervised and reviewed thoroughly all typologies according to the interview questions for interpretation and accuracy, as suggested for qualitative researchers (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). During the organization of the categories, coders and researcher analyzed the interview and field note data to be used to support each conclusion in this research. Accordingly, coders and the researcher examined the data to categorize them into the following six typologies that are highlighted by Epstein's (2010) school, family, and community partnership: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and community.

Steps of qualitative analysis. The following process of Powell and Renner (2003) was followed for analysis of the data:

- Step 1 is about getting to know the data. The coders and researcher gathered at for a group meeting to discuss what concepts connected with each research question. Six coders and researcher read the interview and field note transcripts, using Microsoft Word's reviewing function to note the most prevalent ideas on the side margins of the transcript in different colors. Coders were provided with the list of research questions.
- Step 2 is about focusing the analysis. The coders and researcher reviewed the transcripts. They then identified the most repeated topics to connect them with a typology. Later, the

coders and researchers searched for these typologies in every interview to look for consistencies and differences. All of the typologies identified by coders were written on self-stick easel pads along the walls of a library room as a way to visually focus, record, and share impressions.

- Step 3 is about categorizing information. The coders and researcher used self-stick easel pads to organize the identified typology, patterns, and phrases. Using highlighters, the identified typologies were summarized into categories that would bring meaning to the text explained.
- Step 4 is about identifying patterns and connections. Coders were given a period of two weeks to report all of their patterns found. Coders created a list of connections and relationships between each typology. All six of the coders gave their results of their analysis in a spreadsheet. Later, the researcher and coders connected the summarized categories, which were put into one spreadsheet and matched with quotes to support the categories identified. Using this process, the data were assembled pertaining to a particular typology and to illustrate relationships among them.
- Step 5 is about interpreting. After all the data were organized, the researcher was responsible for reflecting upon the typologies and how they related to the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. Ultimately, she developed a description of the typologies in a qualitative narrative to present conclusions and recommendations (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Limitations

This case study focused on one school, and the findings may not be generalizable beyond this particular case. However, other school sites may note similarities to their setting and

identify some findings that may be applicable to their setting. In agreement, Yin (2003) states the following: “The case study, like the experiment, does not represent a *sample*, and in doing a case study, your goal will be to expand and generalized theories (analytic generalization) and not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generalization)” (p. 10). Also, Lipset, Trow, and Coleman, (1956) add that the focus of the case study analysis is to gain *generalization* and not *particularization*. The survey may have been a biased sample, as parent surveys were distributed and collected at a PTA event for all parents and their students. Parents attending this event may represent a subgroup of parents who are more willing and able to be involved. Thus the survey may not have evenly sampled in a way that allowed access to parents whose characteristics make them more likely to avoid such events or whose other responsibilities prevent them. Another limitation in this study may have been that only Hispanic parents that read English completed the surveys as the number of non-English speaking families in the school is only six percent.

The number of strategies used in this case study increased the rigor of this case study. It was imperative for both the researcher and participants to understand the factors of father involvement in their children’s school activities. Wolcott (2005) termed this “the correspondence between research and the real world” (p. 160). Ultimately, this data collection strategy ensured a match between the researcher’s categories and participants’ realities.

Summary

This case study focused on the phenomena of father’s involvement in their children’s education through the use of semi-structured survey and interview instruments that were used to collect the data from fathers, mothers, administrators, and teachers. The study also used field notes. This researcher gathered evidence from multiple sources to answer the formulated research questions. Also, this case study followed all federal, state, and IRB regulations to

protect human subjects. Accordingly, appendices are attached to provide more information on protocols used in the study.

Chapter 4: Analysis of Data and Findings

Overview

The purpose of this mixed methods case was to examine the levels at which fathers are involved in their children's school activities and their perceptions of that involvement. Accordingly, this chapter presents the analysis of the data triangulation methodology in the manner recommended for qualitative researchers (Creswell, & Plano, Clark, 2007; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). The data collection drew upon three sources of information; surveys, interviews, and field notes conducted at the elementary school named herein George Washington School (GWS). All participant quotes are taken from personal communications made from December 4, 2013 through January 14, 2014. In order to better understand the information from the surveys, interviews, and field notes, the researcher employed triangulation by converging broad numeric trends from the quantitative research and details from the qualitative research (Creswell, 2009). This mix-methods approach applied in the study helped to ensure that there were no bias in the sources, investigator, and methods design (S. Wilson & Durbin, 2009).

This chapter is organized into sections based on demographic data, the research questions, findings from field notes, and a summary of major findings. The following research questions and hypotheses were formulated for this case study:

- RQ1: How do fathers perceive that they are involved in their child's education in the areas of Epstein's six typologies?
- RQ2: How do mothers perceive that fathers are involved in their child's education in the areas of Epstein's six typologies?
- H1: Significant differences exist between fathers' and mothers' perceptions of fathers' involvement in the areas of Epstein's six typologies.

- H2: A significant difference exists between fathers' perceptions of their involvement and their employment status.
- H3: A significant difference exists between fathers' perceptions of their involvement and level of education of fathers.
- RQ3: How do fathers explain their involvement in their children's education?
- RQ4: What are the perceptions of site administrators and teachers regarding fathers' involvement in their children's education?

Findings Regarding Demographics of Survey Participants

The study's quantitative data was collected from two groups, 132 mothers and 112 fathers, for a total of 244 surveys of GWS parents who might or might not be related. As suggested by Leedy and Ormrod (2005), the data must be mathematically calculated and statistically analyzed. Therefore, the two surveys were separately entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for calculation of data and further analyzed through the use of Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequencies and percentages were generated and organized into tables for 35 items of the mothers' surveys and 35 items of the fathers' surveys.

Table 1 notes the findings regarding parents' level of education. Similarities exist between the two groups of parents regarding their educational level. Almost two thirds (64.0%) of the fathers indicated that they earned an associate's degree or above, while the remainder of fathers (36.0%) marked their education as high school or less. Approximately the same number of mothers (39.0%) reported their education as high school or less.

Table 1

Percentages of Parents' Survey Responses Regarding Their Level of Education

Degrees	Fathers (N=112)	Mothers (N = 132)
Post Graduate	4.0%	7.0%
Masters	13.0%	9.0%
Bachelors	32.0%	23.0%
Associates	15.0%	22.0%
High School	33.0%	35.0%
Middle School	3.0%	4.0%

Table 2 presents the results from the fathers' and mothers' survey items regarding marital status. Differences were noted between the mothers and fathers that responded to this survey.

Almost two-thirds (63.0%) of the fathers attending were married, whereas less than one-half of the mothers were married. About one-third (32.0%) of the fathers were divorced, single, or separated compared to almost half (47.0%) of the mothers were divorced, single, or separated.

Table 2

Percentages of Parents' Survey Responses Regarding their Marital Status

Marital Status	Fathers (N = 112)	Mothers (N = 132)
Single	11.0%	17.0%
Married	63.0%	48.0%
Divorced	17.0%	17.0%
Separated	4.0%	13.0%
Blank	6.0%	4.0%

Table 3 shows the results related to parents' employment and unemployment status; 71.0% of the surveyed fathers were employed, and 29.0% of the fathers were unemployed. Fifty-seven percent of the mothers marked that they were employed compared to 43.0% of the mothers marked that were unemployed. Since prior research indicated that fathers reported that

their employment kept them from being involved at their child's school, this finding led to the addition of Hypothesis 1 to this study.

Table 3

Percentages of Parents' Survey Responses Regarding their Employment Status

Employment	Fathers (N = 112)	Mothers (N = 132)
Employed	71.0%	57.0%
Unemployed	29.0%	43.0%

Table 4 illustrates the percentages of GWS parents by ethnic group that participated in the two surveys. The White and Hispanic/Latino groups together represented more than half of the respondents. The percentages of the three major ethnic groups were Hispanic/Latino (26.0%), White (25.0%), and Asian (9.0%). In the mothers' survey the three major ethnic groups were Hispanic/Latino (26.0%), Whites (22.0%), and African American (14.0%).

Table 4

Percentages of GWS Parents' Survey Responses Regarding their Ethnicity

Ethnicity/Race	Fathers (N = 112)	Mothers (N = 132)
African American/Black	7.0%	14.0%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	3.0%	5.0%
Asian	9.0%	10.0%
Filipino	8.0%	6.0%
Hispanic/Latino	26.0%	26.0%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	2.0%	4.0%
White	25.0%	22.0%
Two or more races	9.0%	11.0%
None reported	11.0%	2.0%

Table 5 lists the percentages of the largest racial or ethnic groups that are representative of the population at GWS in comparison with California in 2013. The two large groups of students enrolled at GWS are Hispanic/Latino (38.4%) and White (36.4%). The state of California has recorded the same two groups as the largest statewide, with Hispanic/Latino at 52.7% and White at 25.5% in the 2012-2013 school year. National statistics for the same year indicate an average of 50.4% of White students (California Department of Education, 2013). Although GWS has a diverse population and a wide representation of ethnic groups of parents, the population of GWS does not statistically represent the proportions of racial or ethnic groups in California or the United States in 2013.

Table 5

Percentages of GWS Parents' Survey Responses Regarding their Ethnicity in Comparison with California's Ethnic Groups in 2013

Race or Ethnicity	Percent of students at GWS	Percent in CA
African American/Black	13.0%	6.0%
Indian/Alaska Native	0.4%	0.6%
Asian	5.1%	8.6%
Filipino	2.3%	2.5%
Hispanic/Latino	38.4%	52.7%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.4%	0.5%
White	36.4%	25.5%
Two or more races	3.1%	2.4%
None reported	0.9%	0.9%

Source: California Department of Education, Educational Demographics Office (2013).

Quantitative Analysis

To conduct the quantitative comparisons, the researcher used SPSS Version 21. In addition to the demographic data, quantitative analysis was used to answer Research Question 1 and Research Question 2. Based upon the findings from the surveys, the researcher proposed

three hypotheses, which were tested as described subsequently. Findings for each of these questions and hypotheses will be discussed in the sections that follow. For Research Questions 1 and 2, descriptive statistics were calculated. For Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3, a Pearson chi-square data analysis was the most appropriate test to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between two groups. When performing the Pearson chi-square test, the researcher set the threshold at the 95% confidence level to determine the significance of the statistical correlation of variables. For the first hypothesis, all 35 survey items were analyzed statistically by performing a nominal crosstabulation to generate a joint frequency distribution of fathers' and mothers' perceptions based on their survey answers.

Findings for RQ 1: Fathers' perceptions of their involvement in child's education.

Research Question 1 asked: How do fathers perceive that they are involved in their child's education in the areas of Epstein's six typologies? This question was answered quantitatively through the fathers' survey results. The GWS fathers were surveyed to capture their perceptions of their participation in their children's education. Table 6 lists the highest percentages that fathers marked as their perceptions of their participation in the parenting category. Combining the *all the time* and *sometimes* categories, fathers reported being involved in activities related to parenting as follows: 91% percent attended extracurricular activities; 82.2% reported that they monitor or assist with child's homework; 80% celebrated academic achievement, cultural events, sports victories, or arts performances; 79.5% helped monitor child's school attendance; and 64.3% attended a PTA activity for fathers. Of the fathers, 62.5% indicated that they have participated in a general meeting to involve fathers in their children's education *not at all* or *a few times*.

Table 6

Percentages of Fathers' Perceptions of their Participation in Parenting

Parenting Activities	Not at all	A few times	Some-times	All the time
Monitoring or assisting with your child's homework	6.3%	11.5%	29.5%	52.7%
Helping or monitoring your child's school attendance	5.4%	15.1%	27.8%	51.7%
Attending extracurricular activities	6.3%	2.6%	31.3%	59.8%
Attended a general meeting to involve fathers in their children's education	50.0%	12.5%	23.2%	14.3%
Attended a PTA activity for fathers	16.1%	19.6%	13.4%	50.9%
Attended an event to celebrate academic achievement, cultural, sports, or performing arts	8.0%	11.6%	15.2%	65.2%

Note. Bolded percentages are the highest for that item ($n = 112$ for all item responses).

Table 7 presents the fathers' survey responses regarding their perceptions of their involvement in the category of communication. For the *all the time* and *sometimes* response options, the highest percentages were as follows: communication through parent-teacher conferences (87.0%), attended parent-teacher conference to discuss academic progress (86.8%), phone calls to or from a teacher (78.6%), communication through child's take-home notes (64.5%), and to inform about a child's academic progress (57.1%). Additionally, fathers reported higher perceptions of their participation in the *not at all* and *a few times* categories in the typology of communication for the following items: to give any positive comments about your child's behavior (66.1%) and to make known of any challenges or struggles (53.0%).

Table 7

Percentages of Fathers' Perception of their Participation in Communication

Ways of Communicating	Not at all	A few times	Some-times	All the time
To inform about your child's academic progress	18.0%	25.0%	20.4%	36.6%
To give any positive comments about your child's behavior	42.3%	23.8%	23.2%	10.7%
To make known of any challenges or struggles	32.1%	20.9%	25.6%	21.4%
Communication through parent-teacher conference	6.3%	6.3%	16.0%	71.4%
Communication through your child's planner or notes	17.6%	17.9%	25.2%	39.3%
Emails to or from teacher	27.7%	15.2%	24.1%	33.0%
Phone calls to or from teacher	8.9%	12.5%	37.6%	41.0%
Attended parent-teacher conference to discuss academic progress	6.0%	7.2%	32.0%	54.8%

Note. Bolded percentages are the highest for that item ($n = 112$ for all item responses).

Table 8 presents a summary of fathers' survey responses in regards to their participation in the following categories of volunteering combining the *all the time and sometimes* response options: volunteering in the classroom (11.6%), and donating time or talent to the school (3.1%). However, 100% of the fathers responded in the *not at all* and *a few times* categories regarding chaperoning field trips.

Table 8

Percentages of Fathers' Perception of their Participation in Volunteering

Volunteering activities	Not at all	A few times	Some-times	All the time
Volunteering in the classroom	79.5%	8.9%	11.6%	0.0%
Chaperoning field trips	92.8%	7.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Donating time or talent to the school	68.3%	28.6%	3.1%	0.0%

Note. Bolded percentages are the highest for that item ($n = 112$ for all item responses).

Table 9 shows the fathers' survey responses regarding their perceptions of creating a learning environment at home for their children. The highest percentages are highlighted as follows: for the *all the time* and *sometimes* response options combined, fathers reported they provide technology related equipment (87.7%); space, desk, and light (82.1%); and school

supplies (77.7%). However, for regular homework scheduled, 69% responded with the *not at all* and *a few times* options.

Table 9

Percentages of Fathers' Perception of Their Participation in Creating an Environment Conducive to Learning at Home

Learning at Home Related Items	Not at all	A few times	Some-times	All the time
Space, desk, and light	3.6%	14.3%	12.5%	69.6%
Computer and Printer	4.5%	9.8%	27.8%	57.9%
School supplies	7.1%	15.2%	24.1%	53.6%
Regular homework schedule	50.9%	17.9%	19.6%	11.6%

Note. Bolded percentages are the highest for that item ($n = 112$ for all item responses).

Table 10 summarizes fathers' survey responses about their perceptions of their involvement in the decision-making at their children's schools. The following percentages were yielded when the answer options of *all the time* and *sometimes* were combined: participation in Parent Teacher Association (PTA) (12.5%) and site committee participation (5.3%). In the *not at all* and *a few times* categories, all fathers reported that they were not involved in the safety committee and English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC).

Table 10

Percentages of Fathers' Perception of their Participation in Decision-Making

Decision-making Organizations	Not at all	A few times	Some-times	All the time
Participation in Parent Teacher Association (PTA)	66.0%	21.4%	4.5%	8.0%
Site committee	92.0%	2.7%	1.7%	3.6%
English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC)	97.0%	3.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Safety committee	100%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Note. Bolded percentages are the highest for that item ($n = 112$ for all item responses).

Table 11 lists the fathers' perceptions regarding their involvement in the category of collaborating with the community. The *all the time* and *sometimes* response options were chosen

for “attended PTA activity for fathers” (64.3%), Young Men’s Christian Association (32.2%), and attending general meetings to involve fathers (36.1%). The following two items were marked with the largest percentages in the *not at all* and *a few times* categories: Children’s Center (100%) and Boys and Girls Club (100%).

Table 11

Percentages of Fathers’ Perception of their Participation in Community Organizations

Community Organizations	Not at all	A few times	Some-times	All the time
Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA)	42.0%	25.8%	4.5%	27.7%
The Family Resource Center	92.0%	4.4%	3.6%	0.0%
Boys and Girls Club	93.7%	6.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Children Center (a specific local organization)	100%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Attended a general meeting to involve fathers	28.3%	35.6%	15.9%	20.2%
Attended PTA activity for fathers	16.1%	19.6%	13.4%	50.9%
Attended a meeting or conference or workshop for fathers	94.6%	5.4%	0.0%	0.0%

Note. Bolded percentages are the highest for that item ($n = 112$ for all item responses).

Table 12 lists the fathers’ survey responses in regards to their perceptions of difficulties limiting their participation in their children’s school activities. For the *all the time* and *sometimes* response options, the following perceptions were chosen most frequently: lack of invitation to participate (71.3%), not interested in participation (66.8%), difficulties to find childcare or adult care (65.9%), child’s school hours (65.3%), and dissatisfaction with school’s communication (47.9%). In the *not at all* and *a few times* categories the following items were chosen most frequently: transportation (74.9%), and work schedule (56.8%).

Table 12

Percentages of Fathers' Responses of Difficulties for Not Participating

Fathers' difficulties limiting their participation	Not at all	A few times	Some-times	All the time
Work schedule	47.0%	9.8%	20.0%	23.2%
Child's school hours	25.0%	9.1%	27.6%	38.3%
Difficulties to find childcare or adult care	9.1%	25.0%	19.6%	46.3%
Transportation	71.4%	3.5%	22.5%	2.6%
Lack of invitation to participate	10.9%	17.8%	16.9%	54.4%
Dissatisfaction with school's communication	25.0%	27.1%	35.4%	12.5%
Not interested in participation	11.6%	21.6%	15.1%	51.7%

Note. Bolded percentages are the highest for that item ($n = 112$ for all item responses).

Table 13 shows responses to survey items H and 18, corresponding category, and frequency of response regarding fathers' perceptions of their involvement in their children's school activities. Item H asked, "List the reasons that you may have for not participating in your children's school activities," to which nine responded that family activities prevent them. Item 18 asked, "Please write anything that the teacher or administrator might have done to encourage you to participate in your child's school activities." In response to this item, 47 fathers responded that phone calls were made.

Table 13

Fathers' Responses to Survey Items H and 18

Item	Frequency of comments	Epstein typology (category)
Item H. Please write anything that the teacher or administrator might have done to encourage your participation in your child's school activities:	9	Invitation
Item 18. List other reasons that you may have for not participating in your child's school activities:	47	Parenting

Findings for RQ 2: Mothers' perceptions of father's involvement in child's

education. Research Question 2 asked: How do mothers perceive that fathers are involved in their child's education in the areas of Epstein's six typologies? This question was answered

quantitatively through the mothers' survey results. Table 14 presents the percentages of mothers' perceptions of fathers' involvement in the category of parenting. In this category, the following percentages of mothers rated fathers' participation as *all the time* and *sometimes* categories for these items: 77.3% perceived that fathers attend events to celebrate academic achievement, cultural events, sports victories, or arts performances; 74.3% perceived that fathers attend extracurricular activities; and 68.5% perceived that fathers monitor children's school attendance. However, mothers marked fathers' participation with the highest percentages in *not at all* and *a few times* for the following items: 73.5% of the mothers indicated fathers do not attend general meetings for fathers; 68.8% of the mothers indicated fathers do not assist with homework; and 56.8% of the mothers indicated fathers do not attend PTA activities.

Table 14

Percentages of Mothers' Perceptions of Fathers' Involvement in Parenting

Parenting activities	Not at all	A few times	Some-times	All the time
Monitoring or assisting with homework	47.3%	21.5%	18.1%	13.1%
Monitoring child's school attendance	19.4%	12.1%	15.5%	53.0%
Extracurricular Activities only	15.9%	9.8%	20.5%	53.8%
General meeting to involve fathers in their children's education	60.6%	12.9%	12.1%	14.4%
PTA Activities for fathers	48.5%	8.3%	14.4%	28.8%
Attended an event to celebrate academic achievement, cultural, sports, or performing arts	9.8%	12.9%	14.4%	62.9%

Note. Bolded percentages are the highest for that item ($n = 132$ for all item responses).

Table 15 shows the percentages of mothers' perceptions of fathers' involvement in the category of communication. In this category, mothers rated fathers' participation as *all the time* and *sometimes* categories for the following items: 73.7% of mothers perceived that fathers engaged in communication through parent-teacher conferences, 73.7% perceived that that fathers attended parent-teacher conference to discuss academic progress, and 65.9% marked that they

get phone calls from the school to inform about their child's academic progress. However, mothers marked fathers' communication as *not at all* and *a few times* for the following items: to give any positive comments about your child's behavior (77.1%), communication through email (71.3%), through phone calls to and from teacher (66.0%), to make known of any struggles (65.1%), and communication through planner (43.1%).

Table 15

Percentages of Mothers' Perceptions of Fathers' Involvement in Communication

Ways of Communicating	Not at all	A few times	Some-times	All the time
To inform about your child's academic progress	12.5%	21.6%	30.0%	35.9%
To give any positive comments about your child's behavior	43.5%	33.6%	10.5%	12.4%
To make know of any challenges or struggles	38.3%	26.8%	23.2%	11.7%
Communication through parent-teacher conferences	7.6%	18.7%	19.9%	53.8%
Communication through your child's planner or notes	34.8%	8.3%	15.2%	41.7%
Emails to or from teacher	55.3%	16.0%	10.5%	18.2%
Phone calls to or from teacher	55.3%	10.7%	9.9%	24.1%
Attended parent-teacher conference to discuss academic progress	7.4%	18.9%	19.9%	53.8%

Note. Bolded percentages are the highest for that item ($n = 132$ for all item responses).

Table 16 shows the percentages of mothers' perceptions of fathers' volunteering typology. The following percentages of mothers rated fathers' participation as *all the time* and *sometimes*: 12.2% of the mothers perceived that fathers volunteer in their children's classrooms, 3.2% of the mothers perceived that fathers chaperone field trips, and 2.8% of the mothers perceived that fathers donate their time or talent to the school. In the *not at all* and *a few times* categories, mothers reported 97.2% of the fathers donating time or talent to school, 96.9% chaperoning field trips, and 87.8% volunteering in the classroom. These findings suggest that mothers perceive low father involvement in this typology.

Table 16

Percentages of Mothers' Perceptions of Fathers' Involvement in Volunteering

Volunteering Activities	Not at all	A few times	Some-times	All the time
Volunteering in the classroom	73.4%	14.4%	9.1%	3.1%
Chaperoning field trips	84.1%	12.8%	3.1%	0.0%
Donating time or talent to the school	89.8%	7.4%	2.8%	0.0%

Note. Bolded percentages are the highest for that item ($n = 132$ for all item responses).

Table 17 presents the percentages of mothers' perceptions of fathers' involvement in the category of providing a learning environment at home for their children. This category included four items in which fathers are reported to be more highly involved, combining the *all the time* and *sometimes* categories: 92.9% of mothers reported that fathers provide space, desk, and light; 89.7% indicated that fathers provide school supplies to complete homework; and 87.1% shared that fathers provide computer and technology related items. However, combining the *not at all* and *a few times* categories, 84.40% of the mothers perceived that fathers were not involved in their children's homework schedule.

Table 17

Percentages of Mothers' Perceptions of Fathers' Participation in Creating an Environment Conducive to Learning at Home

Learning at Home Related Items	Not at all	A few times	Some-times	All the time
Space, desk, and light	2.0%	5.1%	17.6%	75.3%
Computer and printer	3.3%	9.6%	9.8%	77.3%
School supplies	5.9%	4.4%	34.1%	55.6%
Regular homework schedule	63.5%	21.3%	10.2%	5.0%

Note. Bolded percentages are the highest for that item ($n = 132$ for all item responses).

Table 18 presents the percentages of mothers' perceptions of fathers' involvement in the category of decision-making. In this category, mothers rated fathers' participation in the *all the time* and *sometimes* categories for the following items: participation in the PTA (21.3%) and the

site committee (2.3%). However, the highest percentages fell in the *not at all* and *a few times* categories for the following items: safety committee (98.5%) and ELAC (97.7%).

Table 18

Percentages of Mothers' Perceptions of Fathers' Involvement in Decision-making

Decision-making Organizations	Not at all	A few times	Some-times	All the time
Participation in Parent Teacher Association (PTA)	66.7%	12.1%	9.9%	11.4%
Site committee	94.7%	3.0%	2.3%	0.0%
English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC)	97.7%	2.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Safety committee	98.5%	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%

Note. Bolded percentages are the highest for that item ($n = 132$ for all item responses).

Table 19 presents the percentages of mothers' perceptions of fathers' involvement in the category of local community organization. In this typology mothers rated fathers' participation with the lowest percentages in the *all the time* and *sometimes* categories: attended a PTA activity for fathers (43.2%); attended a general meeting to involve fathers (26.5%); YMCA (4.5%), Boys and Girls Club (5.1%); using the Family Resource Center (2.0%); and attended a meeting, conference, or workshop for fathers (3.0%). In the *not at all* and *a few times* categories, only one item was marked: Children Center (100%).

Table 19

Percentages of Mothers' Perceptions of Fathers' Involvement in Collaborating With the Community

Community Organizations	Not at all	A few times	Some-times	All the time
Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)	90.2%	5.3%	3.3%	1.2%
The Family Resource Center	93.9%	4.1%	2.0%	0.0%
Boys and Girls Club	90.9%	4.0%	5.1%	0.0%
Children Center (a specific local organization)	100%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Attended a general meeting to involve fathers	60.6%	12.9%	12.1%	14.4%
Attended a PTA activity for fathers	48.5%	8.3%	14.4%	28.8%
Attended a meeting, conference, or workshop for fathers	79.0%	18.9%	3.0%	0.0%

Note. Bolded percentages are the highest for that item ($n = 132$ for all item responses).

Findings for Hypothesis 1: Differences between fathers' and mothers' perceptions.

As described earlier, a statistical analysis was used to analyze data related to hypothesis 1, which proposed that significant differences exist between fathers' and mothers' perceptions of fathers' involvement in the areas of Epstein's (2001) six typologies. While performing the Pearson chi-square test, the researcher set the threshold at the 95% confidence level to determine the significance of the statistical correlation of variables. For the first hypothesis, all 35 survey items were analyzed by using a nominal cross tabulation to see reveal a joint frequency distribution of fathers' and mothers' perceptions based on their survey answers. The results of this analysis indicated no significant difference ($p < .05$) between the mothers' and fathers' perception of the fathers' involvement in any typologies, except two items in the volunteering category that did show significant differences. Test results did not indicate a significant difference in other categories; therefore, the alternative hypothesis was accepted for only the volunteering category, namely there exists a significant difference between mothers' and fathers' perceptions regarding fathers involvement in volunteering at school. Fathers perceive themselves to be more involved than mothers perceive them.

Table 20 shows responses survey items A and 35, corresponding category, and frequency of mothers' responses regarding fathers' involvement in their children's school activities. Item A asked, "Do you want your child's father more engaged with your child's school activities?" to which 105 respondents replied *yes*. Item 35 asked, "Please rate the father of your child in participation in community organization." Two comments fell in the communication category and two fell in the decision-making category.

Table 20

Responses of Mothers' Surveys of Items A and 35

Item	Frequency of comments	Epstein typology (category)
Item A. Do you want your child's father more engaged with your child's school activities?	105	Volunteering*
Item 35. Please rate the father of your child participation in the following community organization:	2	Communication
	2	Decision-making

Note. *Mothers answered that they wanted the father of their child involved in activities related to volunteering.

Table 21 presents the Pearson chi-square data analysis regarding fathers' and mothers' perceptions about donating time to school. In this table the researcher shows the outcome measures of the following variables: (a) fathers' perceptions regarding their involvement in relation to six categories and (b) mothers' perceptions regarding the fathers' involvement in relation to six categories. The categories are based on Epstein's (2001) six typologies (parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community).

Table 21

Chi-Square Test Results of Pearson Chi-Square Data Analysis for Fathers' and Mother's Perceptions: Donating Time to School

Tests	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson chi-square	34.784 ^a	20	.021
Likelihood ratio	22.581	20	.310
Linear-by-linear association	.481	1	.488
N of valid cases	112		

Note. ^a26 cells (86.7%) have expected count less than .05. The minimum expected count is .04.

Table 22 presents the Pearson chi-square data analysis regarding mothers' perceptions of fathers' involvement in volunteering at the school.

Table 22

Chi-Square Tests Results of Pearson Chi-Square Data Analysis for Fathers' and Mother's Perceptions: Volunteering at the School

Tests	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson chi-square	30.607 ^a	16	.015
Likelihood ratio	31.881	16	.010
Linear-by-linear association	.019	1	.892
N of valid cases	112		

Note. ^a20 cells (80.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .32.

Parenting. Survey data indicated a difference between mothers' and fathers' perceptions; 68.8% of the mothers' survey responses indicated that there is a lack of monitoring or assisting with homework on the part of the fathers. However, fathers indicated differently in this section, with 82.2% stating that they do monitor homework. Differences in perception may occur as the percentage of fathers in this sample not living in the house with their child was 32.0%. The difference was not found to be statistically significant, but it is worth noting as a larger sample may have produced a significant result.

Findings for Hypotheses 2 and 3: Employment status and level of education. The following hypotheses were tested:

- H2: A significant difference exists between fathers' perceptions of their involvement and their employment status.
- H3: A significant difference exists between fathers' perceptions of their involvement and level of education of fathers.

As described previously, correlation tests were used to determine the relationship between the variables. While performing the Pearson chi-square test, the researcher set the threshold at the 95% confidence level to determine the significance of the statistical correlation of variables. For

the second and third hypotheses, all 35 survey items were analyzed statistically by performing a nominal cross tabulation to reveal a joint frequency distribution of level of education and employment status in correlation with fathers' involvement based on their survey answers. The results of this analysis indicated no significant difference ($p < .05$). No correlation exists between fathers' perceptions of their involvement at the elementary school level on any item of the survey and their being employed or unemployed. Similarly no significant correlation exists between fathers' perceptions of their involvement at the elementary school level on any item of the survey between the fathers with AA and above degree and those with a high school diploma or less. Hypotheses 2 and 3 were rejected.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative analysis was used to answer Research Questions 3 and 4. This analysis and the findings are described in the following sections.

Findings for RQ3: Fathers' interviews explaining their involvement. Research Question 4 asked: How do fathers explain their involvement in their children's education? This question was answered through the fathers' interview data. The findings are organized using Epstein's (2001) typology for the following subsections.

Parenting. Throughout all the data sources analyzed, the category of parenting stood out as present in all of the interviews. All the interviewed fathers stated that they try to stay engaged with their children's education at home. The 16 interview respondents stated that they monitor homework and school attendance, and spend quality time with their children doing family activities as well as counseling the children on behavior.

Parenting challenge: Scheduling around work obligations. Respondent F5 made the following statement about attending parent-teacher conferences to discuss his child's progress; "I

attend to parent-teacher meeting because it is important for my child to stay motivated and see that I care about his education. I try my best to get home on time to make it to my scheduled meetings.” Respondents F14 and F15 stated that they were not able to participate in the school activities due to their work schedules, noting that they ask their wives to get more involved if they can, but that their wives have a hard time because they also work. Respondent F16 stated, “I always ask for time off at work whenever my son will get an academic award, or there is a parent-teacher conference.” Respondent F13 said that he is only available to attend parent teacher conferences with his children’s teacher because he schedules them at his convenience due to his time constraints.

Parenting challenge: Scheduling as an out-of-home father. Respondent F2, who is divorced, mentioned, “I don’t live with my kids, but I make sure I go to their soccer games and tournaments when my ex-wife lets me know.” Respondent F4 responded with the following: “I only attend parent-teacher conferences, back-to school nights or award ceremonies because I have split child custody. My ex-wife attends.” Another respondent stated, “I only attend weekend family activities; you could say that I am involved in extracurricular activities because on Saturdays they [children] do sports and coach sometimes.”

Communicating: Satisfaction with school’s communication. Six out of the 16 interviewed fathers mentioned that they feel satisfied with the communication. Interviewee F1 stated that he is satisfied with the school’s communication as he regularly receives email blasts and gets information about the school activities and upcoming events in which he and his child can participate. He said:

We get all communication from GWS, phone calls, emails from teachers, mailed communication of district events, and electronic communication such as PowerSchool. I love the fact that I can access my child’s grades and assignments from anywhere, and I

remind her to turn them in on time. I am a father who believes that school and parents should work together to improve student success.

Respondent F2 gave a similar comment about the school's communication by saying:

The school principal and his secretaries work well with every parent that comes through the office. I like the phone calls because my son cannot change the events or try to avoid his responsibilities. I let my answering system pick up the phone call to refer back to it during the week. I have also gotten positive comments from teacher in the planner and some negatives as well. The use of the planner helps so much because it keeps my son accountable for his performance.

Another father expressed that he appreciates the principal's email blasts to parents every Monday as he can stay updated without having to go to the school because of extracurricular schedules. Respondent F5 stated the following about his involvement: "Sometimes it is hard to control what happens when one has to commute to work, but one thing I can do is to drop them off and ensure that they have their homework with them every morning." Respondent F6 stated, "I take turns with my wife. I make sure that I am there for parent-teacher conferences and open house. I also like to check their PowerSchool page so I can keep track of their grades." F13 stated, "What works with me is the principal's weekly phone calls. This form of communication is very helpful because I prefer to be at home working with my daughter who also have soccer practices twice a week and tournaments on Saturdays."

Communicating: Dissatisfaction with school's communicating. Ten out of the 16 interviewed fathers expressed that they are not satisfied with the school sending clear messages for fathers. These fathers indicated that teachers answer their emails and appreciated the principal's effort to keep the parents informed of upcoming events on a weekly basis and his leadership in the school, but they do not see any written information for fathers. They also expressed concerns about being informed about their children's progress before receiving a progress report so they know ahead of time the challenges their children might be having.

Dissatisfied parents expressed that they had a hard time with all forms of communications sent by the school. Respondent F3 said the following:

Communication seems to be directed to parents in general, but not to fathers who might have different schedules, or different family structure. It can be difficult to stay updated with all those school activities if the messages don't reach the fathers

Communicating: Use of electronic communication. In the qualitative interview data, fathers who mentioned that they had higher levels of education stated that prefer electronic communication was the best way to send and receive information between home and the school. Respondent F1 stated that he is satisfied with the school's communication as he regularly gets email blasts and gets information about the school activities and upcoming events about activities in which he and his child can participate. He said:

I work long hours...I am an engineer. I appreciate the fact that I don't have to go to the school to find out about my daughter's progress or behavior. I like electronic communication better than face-to-face. We get all communication from GWS, phone calls, emails from teachers, mailed communication of district events, and electronic communication such as PowerSchool. I love the fact that I can access my child's grades and assignments from anywhere and I remind her to turn them in on time. I am a father who believes that school and parents should work together to improve student success. The school principal possesses strong leadership skills and I see him walking around the school having that interpersonal relationship with all the students.

Two fathers stated in their interviews that community involvement was an important area to them, as they could donate their time and talent. Respondent F4 stated that he would like to see some kind of program for fathers to help with extracurricular activities: "I am a music teacher. I would not mind to volunteer or help to teach whenever would be needed. I think that kids would enjoy learning how to play an instrument." F13 stated the following: "I am a dentist and would be more than happy to come to the school to do free check-ups or inform parents about dental care for their children, but I have not heard of any calls for volunteers" Respondent F11 noted that he does not think fathers are directly invited, but all of the GWS parents are

invited to participate in organizations such as the PTA organization. Respondent F6 gave an example of fathers' school activities by saying: "I enjoyed last year's Doughnuts for Fathers event with my son."

All data suggested that fathers who reported high levels of education prefer to communicate through electronic forms. Therefore, it was found that fathers with higher levels of education participated in only one item marked in the category of communication.

Communicating: Desire for two-way opportunities such as meetings including staff and other parents. Respondent F2 stated the following:

I make sure that there is good communication between my ex-wife and myself when it comes to the kids' school activities. We talk at the end of the day to update each other on what they need to do. However, I feel that it is important for the parents to stay connected with other parents to keep one another informed.

Similarly, Respondent F8 stated, "I feel that it is necessary to have informational meetings to create parent networks." Respondent F13 asserted that he would appreciate two-way channels of communication that would be open for questions, comments, and other interactions with the teachers, stating, "I feel that it would be effective for both parties to encourage an invitation to express comments or keep an ongoing communication about students' progress." Respondent F15 stated, "I would appreciate some kind workshop to better understand the teacher's style and expectations." Respondent F13 stated the following about building a team with the school so both could stay updated:

I help them [children] with homework, watch educational programs, and we go to museums to learn general knowledge because I think it's important for my kids to learn more and to know that they have support at home. I also think that the school should learn more about the families, talents, and goals to create a community.

Similarly, Respondent F14 stated:

I understand that the districts' budgets are tight, but it would be helpful to parents and schools to learn more about each other to improve academic achievement. It is my belief

that if the schools gain some understanding on parenting styles, families' cultural background, and provide training to parents such as homework, or scheduling of assignments, they would have more success in academic achievement.

Comments also revealed that fathers would like to connect with other fathers or organizations to become informed in these suggested areas: Common Core workshop at school site, anti-bullying, take home homework strategies, organizational skills for students, and consistent homework schedule.

Volunteering: Feeling less welcome and comfortable as males. When parents were asked about the school welcoming their participation and volunteer in school activities, Respondents F2 stated:

Personally, I don't think the schools invite fathers to help out. Although fathers can serve as role models to all children in the school setting, women seem to be more accepted as volunteers. I don't get flyers or other forms of communication that is specifically calling for fathers' help.

When fathers were asked about their participation in their children's school activities such as volunteering in their children's classroom or in school organizations such school committees, 12 of the 16 respondents reported that they did not participate because they feel the school has a more female-oriented environment. For example, some expressed their feelings about the school's front office representing more women than men. Respondent F4 stated, "Every time I stop by the office, I only see women doing volunteering work and the same thing in my son's classroom."

Another respondent stated that he felt comfortable coming to parent-teacher conferences when his son was in the younger grades because his son's teacher was a man. Respondent F5 mentioned the following:

Couple of years ago things were different at GWS; my son's teacher was a man and I felt that we could communicate efficient about what was needed in the classroom. I volunteered couple of times with my wife. I sensed that the students welcomed my visits.

Respondent F6 stated, “I usually get flyers about school activities and phone calls, but I don’t hear that there are father activities too often.” Respondent F8 said, “I only see women involved in activities such in the PTA organization.”

Volunteering: Wanting personal and specific invitations. Some fathers stated that they did not feel valued as volunteers because there were no activities where they could donate their time in a way that utilized their specific skills. The interview data revealed that the school has parents who expressed a willingness to assist the school’s committee with their leadership skills or help with the school committees, if the school reaches out to fathers by providing them with a more personal invitation. Respondent F4 stated that he would like to see some kind of program for fathers to help with extracurricular activities: “I would be willing to help in the school utilizing my music skills”. Respondent F7 said:

GWS is a school with a lot of opportunities for fathers to participate with their children. Unfortunately, they [school] don’t seem to have a plan that recruits, trains, or schedules fathers to come to donate their time or talents to the school like I have seen it in other places...such as Utah where we came from 2 years ago.

Respondent F11 noted that he does not think fathers are directly invited. Respondent F4 gave an example of a specific fathers’ school activity by saying: “The PTA Doughnuts for Father is one of my favorite events in the year” F13 stated, “As a dentist, I would like to volunteer by talking to parents on preventive dental care.” Respondent F6 stated:

I have a 9/40 schedule at work, meaning I have one full day off from work every 2 weeks so there is a possibility for me to contribute with my ideas or leadership skills in a school committee. I am not sure if parents sign up at the beginning of the year and who handles the recruitment for leadership positions.

In summary, most fathers felt that they are not personally invited to participate in specific ways.

Learning at home. Parents were asked about the help they provide to their students at home through interactive homework and encouragement. Regarding learning at home,

Respondent F5 stated, “I appreciate when my daughter’s teacher gives her projects that require the help of the family, but I would like to feel connected to the school because there is interaction through the curriculum.” Respondent F5 also stated the following about creating an environment conducive to learning at home:

I appreciate the effort of the district in keeping the band program because my kid took band for three years consecutive. She has developed a passion for music and now she plays the piano. This is a homework [time] where we all participate after supper and it brings the family closer.

Respondent F6 stated the following about his participation:

As a father, I enjoy participating in my children’s school activities. I guide them with their homework, make sure that they have all necessary supplies and equipment to complete their assignments. Yes, I also participate in academic achievement. It is important for their motivation to see my support.

Respondent F8 stated, “In my house, there is a structured scheduled, office space for them to do their schoolwork, computer and printer and I am available to guide them through their homework if necessary.” Respondent F8 further stated the following about homework help: “We always try to get homework guidance from the teachers during parent-teacher conferences and email, but it would be helpful to get clear instructions in homework.” Respondent F9 stated:

Even though I provide all the necessary equipment and supplies for my student at home, I still feel that it would be very helpful for us to help my kid to be successful in school, if her homework is better designed in terms of her taking responsibility to discuss it with us at home. We would be able to give her ideas that might help her to create more ambitious goals.

Respondent F13 described his school participation in the following manner:

I like to make sure that my daughter knows that I am involved in her academic achievement. I believe that the school and parents must be a team working together towards one common goal and that is the student. I like to check her planner, PowerSchool, and go to her soccer games.

Respondent F13 stated that he is not as involved as his wife is, and therefore would like to see more interactive assignments that would help him to have discussions about his student's work and enable her to reach her future academic goals. Respondent F14 stated:

Well, I come home from work at 6:00 p.m. every day, and by then we start dinner and interact as a family. We also do extracurricular activities twice a week. It is hard to fit more activities into my schedule during weekdays.

Respondent F15 also stated that his children's challenge is to manage time, specifically when they have to do chores, homework, and extracurricular activities.

Decision making. Fourteen of the 16 interviewed participants expressed that they are not involved in their children's school committees. They gave various reasons, such as demanding work schedules or not being informed where to apply. Some acknowledged that they had not taken the initiative to find out how to get involved. Respondent F7 stated, "Working as a manager for a large department, I have experience working with people and skills that may help other parents, however; I have not taken the time to explore the school website." Respondent F11 stated that he participated in the ELAC committee, but felt discouraged because he did not see any results, stating, "Two years ago I participated in the ELAC committee and we met several times throughout the year, but I did not see much enthusiasm from parents to stay connected to inform others." Respondent F12 stated the following about applying for decision-making positions at the school: "We are a family of leaders here, my daughter is in the school council committee. I think my contribution would be helpful. I just need to communicate with the school." Respondent F13 said, "I guess I have not informed myself on the various committees that the school has. I only see the PTA leaders organizing events such honor roll and movie-dinner."

Collaborating with the community. During the interviews, fathers were asked if they thought that parent workshops would help them to become engaged in their children's school activities. All of the interview respondents stated that having workshops is something new for the school to discover. Some fathers stated that involving the community would help them to make a connection between the school, the fathers, and the community. Respondent F1 stated the following about community and school:

I know this school is connected to (specific local organization) who helps a lot, but it would be helpful to connect with the fathers who know the community. I would appreciate meetings about community resources that will help me to become more involved or donate time to the school.

Another father, respondent F7 expressed that there is a great need to bring together the businesses, agencies, cultural groups, health services, and recreation programs that will strengthen the parents, school, and curriculum. He elaborated by stating:

I would like to meet with other fathers who know the community to learn to exchange ideas and work together to organize programs. I work for a company that has programs available for schools to teach the students about cultural diversity at no cost.

Respondent F9 stated, "I would like see students from the local community college bring their service learning programs and share their talents with the GWS students. These programs include problem-solving skills." Respondent F10 stated, "I would like to see workshops that connect fathers and also bring information about community resources that help me to create a stronger father-child relationship." Respondent F15 said, "For me as a father, it would be helpful to meet with other fathers who have students in the same grade as my children to discuss after school programs or activities that would include sports or music programs."

Findings for RQ4: Administrators' and teachers' interviews. Research Question 4 asked: What are the perceptions of site administrators and teachers regarding father involvement in their children's education? This question was answered through the administrators' and

teachers' interview data. The findings are organized using Epstein's (2001) typology in the following subsections.

Parenting. Nine out of 10 of the GWS administrators and teachers responded in their interviews that they see the parents involved in parent-teacher conferences; attending PTA activities; and attending events to celebrate academic achievement, sports victories, cultural events, or arts performances. Respondent T8 said, "In my classroom, most of the parents attend parent-teacher conferences, back to school night meeting, and guide their children with homework. I also make myself available to help after school." Respondent T9 said, "Most of my students bring their homework. Those that require help seemed to be guided at home. They have a second set of books at home to work with, and parents seemed to provide all that their children need." Respondent T8 stated the following regarding the school's support for parental education or training:

I know that the district offers training for parents whose native language is not English, like the ELAC committee, and they have been providing information to parents regarding Common Core, which will be implemented next year. The school always sends out information such as email blasts every Monday to inform parents about their available resource and support that the school and district provide.

Respondent F4 added, "GWS sends letters, implements calls and offers face-to-face conferences geared toward learning more about the family needs, background, and to update personal information to be able to contact both parents of the child." Respondent T4 also added to the parenting theme by stating:

I know that I have to remember to send separate paperwork home on special days. I like to meet with both parents to connect with them and ensure them that I am here to guide them through the home school-related activities. Because through our discussions, parents will better understand my expectations as the teacher of their children and I will get to know the student's background.

Respondents T6 and T8 discussed that it is difficult for them to try to involve those uninvolved fathers because they either moved from their families, or did not update their personal information or do not come to parent-teacher conferences. Respondent T6 stated, “I try to conference with both of the parents to learn about their family; I feel well equipped as a teacher when I learn about their cultures, talents, and parents’ goals.” Respondent T8 said:

Unfortunately, our school does not have any programs or workshops to bring the fathers together. Our district holds meetings where parents can attend. I know that the Special Education Local Plan Area, SELPA, a separate organization for Special Education has training or information nights, but not for general education other than parent-teacher conferences.

Communicating. This category emerged in all 10 administrators’ and teachers’ interviews, indicating that they contact all parents on record to invite them to get involved in their children’s school activities. Respondent A1 stated, “In addition to teacher-phone calls, conferences, et cetera, our main form of communication to all parents is our weekly phone messages and emails about things going on.” Respondent A2 said, “If the father’s number is listed on the paperwork, he may receive weekly dialers and e-mails that go out from the principal that notify parents about the current events at the school.” Respondent T4 explained a similar communication system used with all parents:

I believe that Facebook [social media] and Honeywells goes home to all contacts on PowerSchool, also paperwork goes home. For myself, when I have a blended family of two custodial parents, I make a note which days the student goes home with dad or mom. I make a copy of report cards and make it a point to meet with both parents, separately, each quarter, to make sure we are all on the same page for the child’s sake. I like to inform every parent of the school activities as well as the student’s challenges and progress.

Respondent T8 asserted that it is mostly up to the parent to provide the school with contact information, stating:

I don’t think we always have information to reach uninvolved fathers. PTA sends out flyers with students to inform all parents of any PTA activity. The school principal does

Honeywell information on a weekly basis to all students' homes to help get any school information out.

The GWS administrators and teachers stated that communication was an area that needed improvement, through efforts by both the school and the fathers. Administrators and teachers expressed a different perception from the fathers in the category of communication.

Administrators and teachers perceived that fathers get clear messages about their invitation to participate in their children's school activities. These respondents stated that (a) the school does not have another other way to invite fathers other than send information to the address and phone number on record, and (b) they continue to send information with their students to both parents. In addition, respondents stated that the school does not have any programs in place to recruit or organize fathers that are less active in their children's school activities. When administrators and teachers were asked about the school's plan for informing the non-involved fathers about students and families, six of the 10 respondents stated that the school does not target a specific group of parents; everyone receives the same information and opportunities as any other parent. Ten out of the 16 interviewed fathers expressed that they are not satisfied with the school sending clear messages for fathers. These fathers elaborated about the teachers answering their emails and the principal's effort to keep the parents informed of upcoming events on a weekly basis and of his leadership in the school, but they expressed that they do not see any written information requesting for fathers specifically to participate.

Volunteering. When administrators and teachers were asked about inviting fathers to volunteer at their children's school they said, Respondent T4 stated, "They would receive the same information and opportunities as any other parent."

Father's day is the only day of which I know that is dedicated to dads. Recruitment is for all. When I have back-to-school night, I make it clear to both, mom and dad, or others

family members that are more than welcome to put their time in my classroom, and that it is well appreciated by all.

Respondent T7 asserted that volunteering is welcome in her class and that students enjoy when fathers come to the classroom, stating:

In my 20 years of teaching experience, I have had the opportunity to have a couple of fathers or grandfathers volunteer on a regular basis. It brings another dynamic to the classroom and the children to look forward to it. I would say that education, in general, is populated with more females than males.

Learning at home. All administrators and teachers responded about providing information and ideas to families about homework and curriculum-related activities that fathers can do at home with their children. Respondent T7 said, “I also make sure that the students write down their assignments on their planner so parents can monitor their homework and guide them through projects.” Respondent T8 stated, “Policies are usually provided through students’ handbook, planner, parent-teacher conferences, and back-to-school nights.” Respondent A1 stated the following about fathers’ involvement in academic activities:

Information like this is talked about at our annual back to school night, and most teachers have packets that are sent home with each child regarding these things. Most information such as this is presented by the classroom teacher. Occasionally, information may be sent home via our phone system or in handouts.

Respondent A2 stated, “The school has an informational meeting at the beginning of the year with parents and teachers, flyers go home to parents outlining the homework policy and the homework policy is accessible on the district website.”

Decision making. All administrators and teachers gave responses in regards to fathers’ opportunities to participate in leadership organizations at GWS. Respondent T1 said, “There are various positions available posted in the school’s website for the parents to take part in the diverse school representation.” Similarly, Respondent T2 stated the following:

I would like for my students' fathers to participate in school decisions, governance, and advocacy activities on our school councils, but I have not been able to convince anyone to sign up for any position that is usually posted on the school website. It would be wonderful to have fathers from different backgrounds to bring their leadership skills to enhance our leadership teams.

Furthermore, Respondent T3 stated:

Our school always announces whenever there are decision-making opportunities for all parents to be part of the organization. It would be wonderful to have fathers working in our committees, as it would be a more varied perspective between family and community involvement.

Respondent T5 stated the following:

It would be important for fathers to communicate well with other fathers whenever there are decision-making meetings at the school, and I believe that neighbors should join the committees to represent those groups that are underrepresented and provide information on new changes and decisions made at the state level.

Respondent A2, a GWS school administrator, stated, "We value the participation of parent representatives of all backgrounds and the school district has training sessions to help parents develop their leadership skills for parents to share their views and take actions toward shared goals."

School administrators emphasized that organizational positions are available online at the GWS website and that administrators would be willing to walk them through the process if parents decide to apply. Respondent A1 stated, "All parents are invited to take part in decision-making organizations such as PTA or site committee to contribute with their ideas to issues and policies that are designed to help the school's environment."

Community. Ninety percent of the school staff gave their insights when asked about the school collaborating with the community. Respondent T9 stated:

I know that we don't have much community involvement here, but we can start creating it by making every father aware of the school's needs...I would like to see businesses bring their resources to the school about extracurricular activities, government agencies, to bring new information about legislation, cultural agencies, to bring unity in diversity,

and religious organizations to inform fathers, families, and the school. However, we don't have the funds or logistics.

Respondent T4 stated, "The school would benefit from asking parents who know community organizations that can bring human, and other services that people can donate to our school."

Respondent T7 noted,

We rarely have assemblies donated by PTA because of the funding, but if we tap into those resources that parents are associated with through their religious organizations, jobs, and communities; fathers can create networks and strengthen their children's education as well as create academic achievement.

Additional findings based on field notes. Table 23 lists a log of the dates that observations took place at GWS. This study's field notes were collected and dated throughout the research from January 25, 2013 through February 10, 2014. The researcher was an observer-participant and took notes during time spent observing events that happened at GWS; therefore recorded events and filed notes are presented in chronological order.

Table 23

Log of Field Notes

Date	Purpose and observation
01/25/2013	Discussed with Dissertation Chair the topic to explore
01/31/2013	Met with school principal to discuss topic of research
05/05/2013	Met with school principal to discuss items needed to investigate
02/25/2013	Presentation at the staff meeting
04/16/2013	Observation of paternal involvement and talked to PTA
05/25/2013	Observation of fathers' activities in the school
08/19/2013	Presented to principal the research proposal
08/30/2013	Submitted a letter requesting permission to conduct study
09/20/2013	Received the letter of permission to conduct study
11/20/2013	Distributed survey instruments
12/04/2013	Scheduled interviews with administrators
12/11/2013	Scheduled interviews with teachers
01/14/2014	Completed interviews

School site enthusiasm. The GWS was secured as the site for this study by the researcher and chairperson because of its qualities that provided opportunities to learn from real-

life phenomena related to levels of father involvement in their children's education. The researcher and dissertation chairperson discussed with the principal the topic of father involvement and the possibility of conducting an investigation on this topic. After being informed of the details, the school administration, faculty, and staff seemed to be excited to have someone explore the issue, since the superintendent of the district had requested a count of parents involved as mandated in the No Child Left Behind legislation. The principal was appreciative and mentioned that he would like to see the data when the study was completed. He expressed that father involvement was a complex issue and that more mothers seemed to be involved than fathers.

At a staff meeting, the principal introduced the researcher to his faculty and staff, as well as the study's topic of father involvement in their children's education. Faculty and staff seemed to be welcoming and cooperative and volunteered to provide any public school records that might be helpful in exploring the issues at hand. The school secretary expressed that she would help schedule and prepare the rooms that would be needed for survey participants and interviews. As noted in Chapter 3, formal permissions were obtained as required by the IRB.

Parenting. In order to learn more about the school, the researcher needed to walk around the school site to learn if there were fathers involved in their children's education such as dropping off, picking up, volunteering in classrooms, volunteering with school's PTA, or communicating with teachers in conferences on a weekly basis. It was noted that many women walked into the school at various times of the day to deliver items and to pick up their children. The researcher observed that there were more mothers handling routine parent business and only one father dropping off a lunch. Parents came to school for scheduled parent-teacher conferences. On this day, three fathers were observed coming into the school's front office and

asking for their children's teachers. They came in with female companions and waited in the office to be summoned. These parents went in different directions to the teachers' classrooms. The researcher observed that the men seemed to be walking fast and not discussing any issues or talking about anything at all, other than offering courteous words to thank the front office staff. Only three men on two separate occasions seemed to be walking in for a scheduled parent-teacher conference.

On a Tuesday afternoon, from 3:00-5:00 p.m., some fathers came into the afterschool program room to pick up their children. These men seemed to be signing out their kids, asking questions of staff members, and helping their children with backpacks as they were walking out together. The researcher noticed green flyers posted on both doors of the after school program room regarding a PTA invitation for parents to join and announcing that for every family or student that would join, the classroom would receive a \$5.00 coupon to be redeemed at the school's book sale. About three fathers stopped to read the flyers' content, and the rest, about 10 fathers, did not look at the flyers. They walked out of the room with their children talking about homework and the fun they had that day at school. The afterschool program runs independently from the district and provides childcare at an hourly fee to parents who are not able to pick up their children at dismissal time. During this time, fathers seemed to be very interested in their children's activities by asking them, "How was your day?" "What did you do today?" and inquiring about their children with the afterschool staff. Also, during a "Doughnuts for Fathers" event, fathers had the opportunity to eat breakfast with their children. Fathers seemed to be engaged in their conversations with their children.

During one of the school's events, the researcher distributed all surveys for mothers and fathers at GWS during a PTA movie- dinner, as had been planned with the dissertation

committee and school administration. Parents were happy to fill out the survey, as expected. It was observed that there were more women than men present, approximately 129 fathers and 143 mothers. The atmosphere of the GWS movie-dinner was fun. The event was set up in a manner where the students had enough room to see the movie with their parents. Fathers were talking to their children and eating dinner as a family during the movie time. During this event, it was observed that fathers and mothers were interacting with their children such as playing and having conversations. It was also noticed that some fathers and mothers did not have a partner sitting with them. There were a few unaccompanied fathers and unaccompanied mothers talking and eating with their child or with children from other families.

Schedule challenges. The qualitative data suggest that fathers were working in locations and times that did not allow for more school involvement than simply attending parent-teacher conferences. Some fathers stated that they had a very difficult schedule because they work out of the area but try to stay connected to the school through their wives or email blasts. Respondent F5 stated, “I attend parent-teacher meetings because it is important for my child to stay motivated and see that I care about his education. I try my best to get home on time to make it to my scheduled meetings.”

According to the researcher’s field notes, in the month of January 2014, three fathers attended their scheduled parent-teacher conferences. Most of these men were wearing office attire and one was wearing a police uniform. They were walking in a hurry and seemed to be task-oriented as they were not engaging in conversation, but rather seemed to be quiet and focused on their conferences. On July of 2013, field notes showed that four fathers were observed to go into the afterschool program room to pick up their children around 5:00. They were engaging their children in conversations regarding their school day, homework, and fun

that they had throughout the day. Field notes also showed that the school principal mentioned to the researcher that he tries his best to attend his children's school activities.

Communication. It was observed that the school made announcements to students after the principal had sent his weekly phone message to parents about upcoming events that would take place during the week in which parents could participate. He read all the upcoming events for that week to keep the students informed. He also mentioned that he had sent the same announcements to parents whose phone numbers were in the database.

The category of communication was observed in the aspect of fathers engaging in face-to-face communication with school or afterschool program staff when parents picked up their children after the school day ended. About 10-15 fathers seemed to be inquiring about their children's behavior or homework on which the students worked during the afterschool program. During these times the researcher observed that there were seven men working at the school as faculty members.

As noted in the prior subsection, flyers were posted on both doors of the afterschool program room regarding a PTA invitation for parents to join. Another observation in the category of communication was that the PTA sent out invitations with students, bright orange flyers inviting fathers to visit the school for a "Doughnuts for Fathers" event. Another invitation going out with the students was for all parents to a movie night and dinner with their children, to be held at the school. It displayed the time, movie name, food to be sold, and prices.

During the time that parents were in the office, it was noticed that the front office environment seemed to be pleasant. The front office personnel were working with the students that were in the office for discipline or health reasons. The office staff members were also

directing parents that were coming through their doors in a courteous and efficient manner. They provided a welcoming atmosphere for parents.

During observation time, In November, it was noted that all staff and parents that were interacting in the school during regular hours and in the after school program spoke English, in spite of their noticeable ethnic differences. All communication around the school was observed to be in the English language. Moreover, the survey announcements were made in English only because the ELL population of the school is six percent. According to EC Section, 48985 (c) of the California Department of Education Bill 680, the school is not obligated to translate communication in another language other than English unless it is requested. Despite the diversity of the school, the GWS's student body is publically reported at 1,025 with the following ethnic make-up of students: 46.4% Caucasian, 28% Hispanic, 14% African American, 4% Filipino, 4.7% Asian, 1% American Indian, and 0.6% Pacific Islander. An important reason for this research to elaborate on ethnicity is to emphasize the diversity and language found in this urban public school.

Volunteering. A few observations from field notes related to father volunteer involvement. Although fathers were observed to have appointments with teachers or were seen dropping off or picking up their children from school, there were no fathers observed volunteering. Only women were observed working in the GWS workroom making copies, distributing flyers in the mailboxes, and cutting out paper on a daily basis during working hours. For observations during afterschool hours, the researcher observed several PTA mothers and one father who helped out with school events. Female adults were much more present than males at the school. During the planned observation times the researcher observed that there were seven

men working at the school: the school principal, four male teachers, one classroom aide, and one custodian.

Learning at home. Three couples came into the school to have Individualized Educational Program (IEP) meetings. These parents had been scheduled for meetings at different times. It was observed that they did not have much conversation, but seemed to be interested in talking to the staff that was supposed to see them. These couples had brief conversations about helping their children with homework at home and what they could do to help their children meet their IEP goals. The men were dressed nicely and seemed to be going to work. One did not spend much time in the meeting, leaving early while his female companion remained.

Decision making. There were several positions available for the school's site committee posted on the school's website. These school committee position offered to parents who want to represent the school and other parents; remained open throughout approximately 3 months during the data collection period and had not been filled as of the end of the data collection period.

Collaborating with the community. The researcher noted that fathers were engaged in school-related activities, such as fathers in the GWS field setting up for their afternoon game and staying with their children to play baseball. This program runs independently from GWS and the district. It was noted that fathers and their children were bringing in baseball equipment and refreshments, and parking their cars in the GWS parking lot. These baseball events also run on some Saturdays.

Summary of Major Findings

From a triangulation of the multi-source data for this case study of a public suburban elementary school in Southern California, the findings revealed that father involvement is a complex and multidimensional construct influenced by both the external and internal forces of the school environment. The primary findings of the study focused on fathers' involvement with activities related to the typologies of the parenting and learning environment. Analyses of the five sets of data provided major insights regarding fathers' perceptions of their academic engagement with their children and their perceptions of their involvement in their children's school. The five data sets included 112 fathers' surveys, 132 mothers' surveys, 16 fathers' interviews, two administrators and eight teachers' interviews, and field notes.

Demographics. The respondents represented a range of ethnic groups, similar to the population of the school and surrounding area. However, the respondents included more Hispanics and fewer Whites than the population of U.S.

Two hypotheses related to demographic variables were tested. One test compared employed fathers (about two-thirds of respondents) to unemployed fathers (about one-third of respondents). The other test compared higher educated fathers (associates' degree and above) to fathers with a high school diploma or less. These tests revealed no significant difference on any item at .05 for employment and educational level. However, all the fathers that participated in the long interviews were employed and reported a level of involvement that appeared higher than the involvement reported in the survey data.

Parenting. Regarding parenting, after combining the *all the time* and *sometimes* survey response categories, 91.1% of the fathers reported that they attend extracurricular activities; 82.2% monitor/assist with child's homework; 80.4% celebrate academic achievement, cultural

events, sports victories, or arts performances; 79.5% help/monitor child's school attendance; and 64.3% attend a PTA activity for fathers. Half of the fathers indicated that they participate in a general meeting to involve fathers in their children's education. In their interviews, all fathers described in detail how they regularly assist with their children at home helping or monitoring homework. Under the learning environment category, 82.4% of the fathers reported that they provide space, desk, and light; 80.7% provide school supplies; and 64.7% provide computer and technology related equipment. However, in the *not at all* and *a few times* combined categories, 68.8% of the fathers indicated that they do not have a regular homework schedule. This survey item was modified by interview comments such as, "I help with homework" and "there is a structured schedule...at home." Interviews revealed that fathers would like information and workshops directed toward homework and academic activities.

In response to a mothers' only survey item, 105 out of 132 mothers indicated that they wanted fathers to become more involved in their children's schooling. The demographic data showed that 47% of the mothers that responded were single, divorced, or separated. While this finding might explain the high level of response to this item, an additional two-thirds of the married mothers also wanted the fathers to become more involved in their children's academic life.

Communicating. Regarding the typology of communicating, fathers' explanation of their involvement in their children's education was best captured during the interviews. Fathers expressed concerns that communication was directed towards the mothers. Since a third of the fathers are single, divorced, or separated, these fathers may not receive communication. Fathers expressed a preference for more direct and targeted communication from the school, such as short flyers, e-mail blasts, and text messages related to their child. School personnel reported

that they communicate to one set of parents, not separate households. Since observations showed that many fathers pick up their children after school, this is a missed opportunity for communication by the school as the school can approach fathers and inviting them to school activities. Also, fathers remarked that the elementary school is female-dominated and that they feel uncomfortable in this culture. They suggested that the female teachers seem to provide a different culture by providing opportunities for men. They expressed that the school tends to provide social activities, not task or project-oriented activities. They shared that they preferred more structured homework projects.

Volunteering. Applying the data from the fathers ($n = 112$) and mothers ($n = 132$) in response to a 35-item survey that applied Epstein's (2001) six typologies of parent involvement, a hypotheses was generated that there was a difference between mothers' and fathers' perceptions of father's involvement in their child's schooling based on Epstein's six typologies at .05 significance level or less. This hypothesis was supported on only two items in the volunteering typology. A Pearson Chi-square test was performed on the parent responses. In the typology of volunteering in their child's classroom, fathers and mothers disagreed; fathers perceived that they were more involved in volunteering than the mothers. Mothers' and fathers' perceptions tended to be similar across the other 33 items. In addition, fathers and mothers agreed that the fathers have little involvement in school decision-making (67-99% in *not at all* response option) and collaboration with the community (61-94% in *not at all* response option). However, during the interviews some fathers described opportunities for involvement that they would like and others remarked that their work schedules did not offer any time off during the school day. Site administrators and teachers agreed and supported the finding that fathers had low participation in volunteering. Several fathers mentioned that they do not know who handles

recruitment, or where to apply for organizational positions that might be available at their children's school. Some admitted that they had not made the effort to find out how to volunteer. Fathers' comments indicate that they feel that they are not personally invited to participate in specific ways but would like to be invited to use their specific skills. They also reported feeling intimidated or less welcome due to the female-dominated staff and faculty, as well as the preponderance of female volunteers.

Learning at home. Regarding learning at home, after combining the *all the time* and *sometimes* survey responses categories, fathers reported making contributions to their children's learning environment, such as ensuring that children have school-related supplies and equipment, both for home and school use. Positive perceptions of fathers' engagement in parenting and the home learning environment were also supported by administrators' and teachers' interview comments. Both fathers and mothers perceptions agreed that fathers were not much involved in structuring or maintaining a homework schedule or homework help, though fathers generally saw their work schedule as constraining their ability to assist in these tasks.

Decision making. Fathers expressed a different perception than the administrators and teachers regarding invitations to participate in decision making. All of the administrators and teachers offered similar comments that they value the participation of parents who can represent the community. They also added that available positions for any committee are posted on the school's website and all parents may apply. Site administrators and teachers agreed that fathers had low participation in decision-making.

Community. Site administrators and teachers agreed that fathers had low participation in collaborating with the community. In the researcher's observations, as recorded in the field

notes, fathers participated in sports activities on school grounds that were part of a community-based organization.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary

Research findings produced in the last 30 years have revealed that maternal involvement in children's school activities is more prevalent than fathers' involvement. According to Ho and Hiatt-Michael (2012), research shows that fathers tended to be involved in ways that are not always perceived by school personnel. For example, across cultures, fathers assume the primary role as breadwinner even though statistics reveal that mothers are highly represented in the workforce. This value keeps fathers away from the home and limits their involvement with their children and their school. Their research indicated that fathers tended to become more involved with their children's studies, homework, and educational opportunities when the children became adolescents.

Statement of problem. Ho and Hiatt-Michael (2012) remarked that little is known about paternal involvement in their children's school lives, especially at the elementary school level. Therefore, to investigate the issue of father involvement in their children's education at the elementary school level, the researcher collected data from parents and staff of a public elementary school with a population of 1,025 diverse students in suburban Los Angeles. This site was selected because it presented the opportunity to develop a case study in a typical American elementary school with a diverse population. This study examined the reasons why fathers state that they became involved in their children's school, the ways in which fathers presently report that they are involved, and how fathers perceive the school should promote father involvement.

The federal and state governments are urgently working to create stronger parental involvement that will help foster academic achievement in schools. The U.S. Department of

Education (2011) highlighted that under the NCLB, Sec. 1118, school districts receive allocated money intended to support parental involvement such as child care, transportation, and language accommodations in cases where these needs prevent a parent from becoming involved.

Statement of purpose. Low paternal involvement in schooling may impact their children's educational achievement. The message regarding the importance of school begins when the child enters an educational setting. Because of concerns regarding the apparent low paternal involvement in schools, an-depth study was needed to ascertain paternal involvement in schools at the time children enter school. To explore the issue of low paternal involvement, this study also included mothers' perceptions of fathers' involvement in their children's education in the elementary school setting. This study examined the reasons why fathers state that they became involved, the ways in which fathers presently report that they are involved, and how fathers perceive the school should promote father involvement.

Theoretical framework. In this study, the student's father or father figure was the central focus of the data collection and interpretation. Father involvement activities encompassed all of Epstein's (2011) six types and included such activities as reading and responding to school communication, attending parent-teacher conferences, monitoring and assisting in class assignments, helping out within the classroom, volunteering in fundraising, serving on advisory committees, and participating in any social events (Epstein, 2011; Hill & Taylor, 2004). This researcher gathered evidence to answer the formulated research questions. The data collection garnered information from site administrators, grade level teachers, and mothers as well as fathers in order to support and enhance the data gathered on fathers' perceptions of their involvement in their children's schooling.

Research questions and hypotheses. The following research questions and hypotheses were formulated for this case study:

- RQ1: How do fathers perceive that they are involved in their child's education in the areas of Epstein's six typologies?
- RQ2: How do mothers perceive that fathers are involved in their child's education in the areas of Epstein's six typologies?
- H1: A significant difference exists between fathers' and mothers' perceptions of fathers' involvement in the areas of Epstein's six typologies.
- H2: A significant difference exists between fathers' perceptions of their involvement and their employment status.
- H3: A significant difference exists between fathers' perceptions of their involvement and level of education of fathers.
- RQ3: How do fathers explain their involvement in their children's education?
- RQ4: What are the perceptions of site administrators and teachers regarding fathers' involvement in their children's education?

Research methodology. In the United States, an elementary school is the first compulsory level of education for American children. This study used a case study of a typical public American elementary school with a diverse population. This case study employed a mixed-method design to investigate father involvement in their children's education and to answer the research questions. Research question 1 was primarily answered through the fathers' survey (see Appendix I) based on Joyce Epstein's (2001) typology model. Research question 2 was primarily answered through the mothers' survey based on the same model. Hypothesis 1 was addressed through comparing the responses from the fathers' surveys and mothers' surveys.

Hypotheses 2 and 3 were addressed through the fathers' survey. Research question 3 was answered through semi-structured interview questions (see Appendix K) asked of 16 GWS fathers. Interview questions were based on Epstein's six typologies of Epstein. Research question 4 was primarily answered through interviews of two administrators and eight teachers from grades K through six including SDC (see Appendix L); these interview questions were also based on Epstein's six typologies.

This case study required testing of three hypotheses, as the survey data contained nominal data; therefore, the Pearson chi-square was the most appropriate test to perform because the study compared survey results from two groups. For each hypothesis, a Pearson chi-square test was applied to determine any significant differences. The purpose of Hypothesis 1 was to determine if there were any differences between fathers' and mothers' perception of fathers' involvement by categories based on Epstein's (2011) six typologies. Hypothesis 2 was designed to determine if there was a difference between employed and unemployed fathers' degree of involvement in any of the categories. Lastly, hypothesis 3 was designed to determine if there was a difference between fathers' level of education their involvement in any of the categories.

Accordingly, this study employed triangulation of the three data sources: surveys, interviews, and field notes. Surveys were completed by parents at GWS who may be or may not have been related: 132 surveys were filled out by mothers and 112 were filled out by fathers.

After the quantitative data were collected, the researcher gathered qualitative interview data from 16 fathers, two administrators and eight teachers, as well as from field notes recorded in chronological order during observations. The 26 interviewed participants were contacted via email and they all agreed to be interviewed in person at a time and place that was convenient for them. The two administrators and four teachers were interviewed in the GWS conference room,

and the other four teachers asked to use their classrooms instead. The fathers' interview questionnaire contained seven semi-structured questions (see Appendix K), and the administrators' and teachers' contained six semi-structured questions (see Appendix L). Furthermore, this study also employed observation field notes to ensure that every aspect of the research was explored.

Field notes taken during site observations were recorded in chronological order. The field notes provided the researcher with the opportunity to reflect on the environment, behaviors, and displayed objects that would allow the study to explore the topic of fathers' involvement in their children's education at a more in-depth level.

Summary of findings. From a triangulation of the findings, this case study revealed that father involvement is a complex and multidimensional construct influenced by both the external and internal forces of the school environment. Analyses of the five sets of data—112 fathers' surveys, 132 mothers' surveys, 16 fathers' interviews, two administrators and eight teachers' interviews, and field notes—provided major insights regarding fathers' perceptions of their academic engagement with their children and their perceptions of their children's school. The respondents represented a range of ethnic groups, similar to the population of the school and surrounding area. However, the respondents included more Hispanics and fewer Whites than the general population of the United States.

Mothers indicated that they wanted fathers to become more involved in their children's schooling. The demographic data reported that 47% of the mothers that responded were single, divorced, or separated. While this finding might explain the high level of response to this item, an additional two-thirds of the married mothers also wanted the fathers to become more involved in their child's academic life. A comparison between the mothers' and fathers' perceptions of

the fathers' involvement on the two sets of surveys revealed that mothers and fathers perceived similar father participation levels on items across five of the six categories ($p < .05$).

The primary findings of the study focused on fathers' involvement in six categories defined by Epstein's (2011) typology. Regarding parenting, combining the *all the time* and *sometimes* categories, 91% reported attending extracurricular activities; 82% reported monitoring or assisting with a child's homework; 80% reported celebrating academic achievement, cultural events, sports victories, or arts performances; 80% reported helping or monitoring a child's school attendance; and 65% reported attending a PTA activity for fathers. Half of the fathers indicated that they had participated in a general meeting to involve fathers in their children's education. In their interviews, all fathers described in detail how they regularly assist the child at home by helping with or monitoring homework. In the home learning environment category, 82% of the fathers reported providing space, desk, and light; 81% reported providing school supplies; and 75% reported providing computer and technology related equipment. However, 69% of the fathers indicated that they are *not at all* involved in the regular homework schedule. This survey result seemed modified during the fathers' interviews with comments such as "I help with homework" and "there is a structured schedule...at home." Interviews revealed that fathers would like information and workshops directed toward homework and academic activities. They shared that they preferred more structured homework projects. Positive perceptions of fathers' engagement in parenting and the home learning environment were also supported by administrators' and teachers' comments during the interviews. In addition, fathers' perceptions of their involvement in their children's education appear to be not significantly related to employment status or level of education of the father ($p < .05$).

In the category of volunteering in their children's classroom, fathers and mothers disagreed. Fathers rated their participation higher than the mothers rated father participation. However, perceptions of both groups were that fathers were not especially involved in volunteering at the school. In addition, fathers and mothers agreed that the fathers have little involvement in school decision-making (99% marked the *not at all* response option) and collaboration with the community (94% marked the *not at all* response option). However, during the interviews, some fathers described opportunities for involvement that they would like, and others remarked that their work schedules did not offer any time off during the school day. Fathers remarked that the elementary school is feminine dominated and that they feel uncomfortable volunteering in this culture. They suggested that the female teachers seem to provide a female culture and fewer opportunities for men. They expressed that the school tends to provide social activities, not task or project-oriented activities. All the fathers that participated in the long interviews were employed and reported a level of involvement that appeared higher than the survey data, but this observation did not allow for testing for statistical significance. Site administrators and teachers agreed that fathers had low participation in decision-making, volunteering, and collaborating with the community.

Regarding the category of communicating, fathers' explanation of their involvement in their children's education was best captured during the interviews. Fathers expressed concerns that the school's communication was directed towards the mothers. Since a third of the fathers are single, divorced, or separated, these fathers may not receive adequate school communication. The fathers expressed a preference for short, targeted, and focused text messages and flyers from teachers and the school. The researcher observed noted that many fathers pick up their child

after school, which may be an opportunity for communication of which the school is not currently taking advantage.

Conclusions

The following sections discuss the conclusions drawn from the findings of this case study.

Conclusion 1: Fathers' are actively invested in children's academic learning at home. From the fathers' survey responses, fathers indicated the largest percentages in the *all the time* and *sometimes*; 82.4% indicated that they provide space, desk, and light for their children to complete their assignments, 82.2% marked that they monitor or assist their children with school assignments, 80.7% of the fathers indicated that they provide school supplies for their children, 79.1% indicated that they help monitor their children's school attendance, and 64.7% percent marked that they provide technology related items for their children to complete their assignments.

Using the Pearson chi-square test, no correlation was found to exist between fathers' perceptions of their involvement at the elementary school level on any item of the survey or their employment status. Similarly, no significant correlation was found to exist between fathers' perceptions of their involvement at the elementary school level on any item of the survey between the fathers with associates' degrees or higher and those with a high school diploma or less. Thus, hypotheses 2 and 3 were rejected.

From the mothers' surveys, mothers indicated the largest percentages of their perceptions about fathers' involvement in the combined categories of *all the time* and *sometimes* in the following manner: 92.9% indicated that the father of their children provides space, desk, and light for their children to work on their school assignments; 89.7% indicated that the father of

their children provides school supplies; 87.1% indicated that the father of their children provides technology related items; and 68.5% reported that the father helps to monitor their children's school attendance.

In interviews, fathers mentioned that they provide a leaning environment at home. For example, Respondent F12 stated:

I provide all school supplies, computer with printer, and study space as well as remind my students to organize their backpacks, folders, and to turn in their assignments on time. However, I need to call or e-mail the teacher to ask for ideas to develop educational goals for my children.

Moreover, Respondent F15 stated, "Every night I ask my kids to show me their planners to be sure that all of their assignments for that day are completed and to inform myself of what they are working on." Moreno and Chuang (2012) found in their study that fathers understood their responsibilities of supporting their children in academic activities and maintaining a strong connection with their children's school. Research has found that fathers who are committed to guiding their children at home become more interested in their children's academic activities (Lamb & Tamis-LeMonda, 2004).

Other fathers elaborated on the guidance they provide at home to their children after work, expressing a wish for clear instructions on long-term projects especially when they do not live with their children. Forty-seven percent of the mothers surveyed indicated that they were divorced, single, or separated. Respondent F4 stated,

When I come home from work, I spend time with my daughter checking that she understood her math problems. Sometimes, we review for her tests, rewrite notes, or just discuss what she did in school. When she is with her mother, we discussed homework by phone.

Respondent F11 stated, "During weekends, we spend time as a family helping each other with projects and giving each other ideas on how build models for social studies such as a mission

project.” Studies by McLanahan and Carlson (2002) and Yeung et al. (2001) have shown that high levels of father involvement in their children’s school activities creates a strong father-child relationship.

Observations confirmed that some fathers were on the GWS campus attending scheduled parent-teacher conferences. Additionally, parents were observed in the afterschool program picking up their children and inquiring about their homework completion. In support of this conclusion, Dauber’s and Epstein’s (1993) research supports the conclusion that fathers who work with their children at home gain a clearer understanding of their teachers’ expectations and how to enhance their children’s academic experience. Additionally, research from Spain presented at the ERNAPE symposium highlighted an urgency to close the gap between teachers and fathers in the school setting in terms of keeping fathers more involved in their children’s school activities (Amaya Martinez-Gonzalez et al., 2013). Previous research found that in order for schools to create an inviting learning environment, they must first create a setting where students will grow academically (Epstein 2001). Accordingly, Feuerstein (2000) found that when the schools engage parents in meaningful dialogue, the increase in parental participation in their children’s school activities grows overall.

Conclusion 2: Many fathers’ see their support role primarily as providing a learning environment at home but not necessarily through volunteering. In their interviews, 100% of the fathers asserted that they monitor homework, school attendance, and spend quality time with their children. However, 75% of the fathers stated that their marital status impedes them from volunteering at their child’s school.

Respondents F14 and F15 stated that were not able to participate in the school activities due to their work schedules, but ask their wives to become more involved if possible. However,

some mothers also have a hard time because they also work. Respondent F16 stated, “I always ask for time off at work whenever my son will get an academic award, or there is a parent-teacher conference.” Respondent F2 stated:

I work outside this area, that makes it hard for me to attend meetings during the day...I have my wife to keep me updated on the kids' activities and assignments. It is all about teamwork. During the weekends, we spend time together going to educational, extracurricular activities, and planning school activities such as projects that need to be completed and usually require of my guidance.

During field observations, the researcher noticed that fathers attended parent-teacher conferences and PTA activities such as movie night and doughnuts for fathers. Additionally, after school hours, it was observed that fathers were present at the school site picking their children up from the afterschool program and asking about their children's school day. Barnson and Benett (2005) found that when teachers implement student-led conferences, parents tend to attend more often, as their child creates a bridge between the school and the parents by enhancing school-to-home communication.

Of fathers' surveys, with the *all the time* and *sometimes* response options combined, 63.5% responded that their children's school schedules conflicts with the father's work schedule. Only 11.6% of the fathers responded that they are able to volunteer in their children's school, and 3.1% of the fathers responded that they donate time or talent to their child's school. Also, 32% of the fathers stated that were either divorced, separated, or single.

In support of this conclusion, researchers Ho and Hiatt-Michael's (2012) study of Korean fathers found that their involvement depended on societal expectations according to Korean culture. However, nowadays, fathers are forced by either their divorce status, economic strains, more women in the workforce, or family structures to become more involved in their children's education. Fletcher (2008) and Stiggins (2005) have suggested that one way to build meaningful

communication between the school and parents is to hold student-led conferences as this strategy shows parents that students take ownership and can be honest about their academic standing. Moreover, student-led conferences allow parents to see the school's involvement in their children's education. Epstein and Sanders (2000) and Simon (2000) recommend that schools involve both parents to volunteer their time at convenient times so that the amount of parental involvement increases.

Conclusion 3: Administrators and teachers recognize that they frequently communicate with parents, but do not specifically target fathers. Textual analysis of the administrators' and teachers' interviews revealed findings related to the fact that the school is trying to communicate with all parents through email blasts and back to school night meetings, and that the information is intended for all parents. However, analysis of the demographic data yielded that 32.0% of the fathers indicated that they are single, separated, or divorced. Mothers' survey data indicated in the *not at all* and *a few times* categories combined revealed the following high percentages: 66.0% of the mothers marked that fathers do not call or get phone calls from the teacher, and 77.0% do not get any positive comments about their child's behavior.

Fathers' interviews also revealed that they feel they are not well-informed through the email blasts sent out by the school. Respondent F3 stated:

Communication needs to be clear to the fathers when the school calls so fathers or directed to fathers so we know that it is for us and we feel valued by the school. I believe that the school should make a greater effort to reach more men as some of us have different work schedules and commitments to attend.

Further, field notes showed that there could be an opportunity to engage the uninvolved fathers in activities, as fathers were clearly participating in PTA activities, dropping off their children, and picking up their children at the afterschool program.

The interview data suggest that non-resident fathers might not be able to get the information sent out through email blasts, as well as married fathers who feel that the mothers should handle the messages. Respondent F15 stated, “My wife and I are a team. She goes to assemblies, PTA activities, and makes sure that the kids have all necessary needs fulfilled.” Additionally, 100% of the GWS interviewees responded that there is no specific group targeted to inform parents about school activities, but all parents are invited. For example, Respondent T8 stated that it is mostly up to the parent to provide the school with his contact information, stating, “I don’t think we always have information to reach uninvolved fathers.” Additionally, T6 stated:

It would be helpful to all parties if household members would provide uninvolved fathers’ information so we can update them on what their children would be participating; unfortunately, it is hard for the school to get that information for record purposes. For that reason, we don’t target groups of fathers, but all parents to get involved in their children’s school activities.

Teacher and administrator respondents explained the use of weekly phone messages and emails, the use of social media, a PowerSchool program intended as a parent online resource for school communication, and paper notes. Teachers reported making sure notes, report cards, and meeting invitations are sent to both parents separately.

Accordingly, research findings by Feuerstein (2000) and Grolnick et al. (1997) supports this conclusion, as these researchers have found a wide range of factors that influence paternal involvement such as socioeconomic status and teacher practices. Therefore, the schools should try to make all efforts to reach out to all fathers.

Conclusion 4: Fathers perceive that the school provides limited communication with those who are non-resident fathers, who need a more concerted effort to be reached consistently. Survey demographic data showed that 32% of the fathers stated that were not

living in the home due to their marital status of being divorced, single, or separated.

Additionally, 47% of mothers reported in their surveys that they were single, divorced, or separated. Accordingly, fathers' perceptions of the school communicating to them about their children marked high in the *not at all* and a *few times* choice responses for the following items: 66.1% felt the school did give any positive comments about their children's behavior, and 53.0% marked that the school does not communicate their children's academic struggles.

In the interviews, two fathers stated that they receive information through their ex-wives only when the ex-wives provide it. Respondent F3 said, "Electronic communication needs to be clear to the school is sending the messages to participate in their children's school activities. It only seems to be directed to parents in general." Though school personnel appear to believe their communication is adequate, non-resident parents should be encouraged to provide their contact information and take initiative to discover which of the multiple existing communication methods is most effective for them.

Researchers have noted that when the school sends clear messages to the family there is a connection between the school and the family (Epstein, 2001; Henderson, Johnson, Mapp, & Davies, 2007; C. Lewis et al., 1995). Moreover, researchers emphasize that when the school and communities team up to create family-oriented programs and services, they focus on the needs of the family, family dynamics, reasonable times, and for all family members. Schools should have a multifaceted approach to reach every single parent to try to involve them in their children's school activities, especially those parents who come from culturally diverse backgrounds (Davies, 2002). This conclusion is supported by Hughes and Fisher's (2006) study where they found that schools must work with agencies, families, and other services to promote father-

friendly communication through invitations from teachers and children, as well as workshops for fathers to network with other fathers.

Conclusion 5: Fathers' desire specific and personal invitations to volunteer. Based on their interview responses, fathers seem to want to volunteer in their children's school activities; however, they are not currently active in participation. During their interviews, four fathers stated that they would like to volunteer using their specific skills. Respondent F3 stated, "If my son's teacher would ask me to donate my time doing something where I can use my skills, I would be more than happy to come to the school." Another interviewee, Respondent F7, stated the following about his desire to help:

Because of the long hours that I work, it makes it hard to go to my children's school or classroom to volunteer during school hours. I would like to donate my time using my skills in construction. I don't know if fathers can go to donate their time after school hours, neither have I heard from other fathers.

A study by Moreno and Chuang (2012) found that fathers do not usually mention that they want to participate in committees focused on school communication, volunteering, or making their voices heard. Nonetheless, in this study, fathers who had some college education or who had specific skills expressed more desire to become engaged in their children's school activities.

Other fathers stated that they would like to get more involved in their children's school activities if the school principal or teacher would contact them. Respondent F8 stated:

I have not contacted the school or teacher to help out because I prefer that the school gets in touch with me so I can tell them about my skills in technology. I would like to participate either by bringing information during career day or helping wherever my skills are needed as long as it is after my working hours.

Some fathers stated that they did not feel valued as volunteers because they were not aware of activities where they could donate their time. Fathers expressed a desire for more specific invitations, and administrators and teachers expressed the opinion that they have shown due

diligence in this area. Respondent F11 stated, “I would have no problems in helping out; however, I have not heard from anyone at the school inviting fathers to participate in any kind of volunteering. I am available to help out any day after 3:00 p.m.”

Field notes showed that between 10-15 fathers go to pick up their children from the after school program daily. These fathers seem to be interested in finding out about their children’s school day and what was taught. They sign their children out and talk to the afterschool coordinator about their children’s activities. This could present an opportunity for the school to involve fathers who would like to be active participants in the school community after their working hours. The school can involve the fathers in specific ways where they can utilize their specific skills. In support of this conclusion the literature has shown that specific invitations for parent involvement from teachers and students have been identified as motivators of parental involvement in elementary school (Epstein, 1986; Kohl et al., 2002; Simon, 2004). Furthermore, Epstein et al. (2002) state that a high quality of parental interactions with the schools improve academic success.

A more concerted effort by schools may be warranted, as much literature has found that fathers’ active participation contributes to children’s overall well-being, including social, emotional, behavioral, language, and education development (Buchanan & Flouri, 2004; Lam, 2004; Roggman et al., 2004; A. Sarkadi et al., 2008).

Conclusion 6: Fathers perceive that the elementary school is feminine gender-oriented and report that this inhibits their volunteering. The survey data showed that fathers have a very low rate of participation in the volunteering category. Of the 16 fathers interviewed, 75% (12) fathers commented that the school is feminine-oriented as the school staff and faculty are mostly women; therefore, they expressed feeling out of place at school, including the types of

activities offered for parent participation. Fathers reported more interest in specific activities than in social gatherings. Respondent F4 said:

I can make the time to help out at my child's school because I am self-employed, but I don't go to volunteer because I see only women helping out. I don't think there are men volunteering at GWS. Whenever I go inside the school to drop something off or pick up my kids early, I only see women that are either working in the front office, playground as aides, or as volunteers. I must say, it can be intimidating to be in a women's only environment.

Respondent F9 expressed a desire to volunteer, but stated, "I want to volunteer, but the last time I went there, I felt out of place as I was the only father there." McBride et al. (2001) have suggested that fathers can be encouraged to participate in the school environment through support programs that are specifically designed for fathers in their children's school. DeLuccie (1996), Lamb (1987), and Russell (1982) found in their studies that men see fatherhood enjoyable when they interact positively with their children (Almeida & Galambos, 1991; Coltrane, 1996; Lamb, 1997). It was also found that men's satisfaction increases and they become more encouraged to do even more activities with their children (DeLuccie, 1996). Men also learn of their children's development (Lamb, 1987); therefore, they gain a better understanding of their children's needs, enrich their father-child relationship, and gain pleasure out of fatherhood (Gronseth, 1975; Lamb, 1987; Lamb et al., 1987).

Field notes revealed that fathers were seen dropping off and picking up their children school, but the researcher did not see fathers doing volunteer work around the campus. In contrast, several women volunteers were observed working in the school, talking to students and teachers; they seemed to know people around the campus as they would stop to talk. The field notes support this conclusion; there are no men working in the front office other than the school principal, four male teachers and one para-professional working at the site. Epstein (2011) described the benefit of volunteering as follows: "Volunteering activities help educators, and

families work together to support the school program and children's work and activities.” (p. 437). It would benefit schools, students, and parents if the volunteer force included fathers' skills and abilities.

Conclusion 7: Fathers stated that they need more specific communication such as two-way communication opportunities between the school and parents. From the fathers' survey, 47.9% indicated that they were dissatisfied with the school communication, and 34.9% of the mothers marked that they do not receive communication about their children struggling at school. However, 32.9% of the fathers stated that they received positive comments.

From the fathers' interviews, 62.5% indicated that they would like to receive more interactive communication about their children's progress. Respondent F9 stated:

I would like to receive answers either through my kid's planner or through email after I've sent a question about my kid's assignment or about his grades. I prefer to know his struggles ahead of time, so I can provide the help he needs about a particular subject or assignment. I don't like to know that he had poor test performance or missed assignments after the fact.

Respondents expressed a desire for more two-way communication channels that would be open for questions, comments, and other interactions with the teachers. Respondent F5 stated: “I feel that it would be effective for both parties to encourage [school] invitations to express comments or keep an interactive communication going about the students' progress.” In correlation with the encouragement, Epstein and Sanders (2000) asserted that one of the topics where more research is needed is the importance of getting schools, families, and communities motivated to work to create successful students. More specifically, parental involvement entails keeping parents informed of what is happening with the child in school (McBride, Schoppe-Sullivan, & Ho, 2004).

In this case study, fathers seemed to appreciate one-to-one communication or reports to them specifically about their children's academic progress. It was observed that fathers were talking to the afterschool program director when fathers were picking up their children from the afterschool program. These fathers seem to want to learn about their children's behavior and completion of homework through the afterschool staff. They seemed satisfied with the answers given and walked out of the room talking to their children about their day and what they were going to do when they got home. Some fathers reported an interest in more meetings to connect specifically with other fathers to network and share information. In support of this conclusion, researchers at the ERNAPE conference stated that it is imperative for schools, parents, and the community participants to cultivate a harmonious and interactive communication among all interested parties based on mutual respect, tolerance, and recognition of diverse views to create optimum learning that will lead to student achievement (Sarmiento, Martins, Gomes, & Antunes, 2013). Further, Feuerstein (2000) found that parents' tend to participate more when their children's school invite them to have meaningful discussions.

Conclusion 8: The central response options in the parent surveys were not clearly defined for the parents. The panel of experts had recommended and approved the response categories, as these had been applied in prior studies. The response options (scale anchors) were *not at all*, *a few times*, *sometimes*, *most of the time*, and *all the time*. Thus, the dissertation committee accepted those categories. However, during data analysis, the researcher was challenged to interpret what parents meant by the categories *sometimes* and *most of the time*, as these responses proved vague. Thus, parents might not have provided the precise degree of their perceptions regarding father involvement in their children's education at GWS.

Regarding the survey categories, the researcher and the dissertation committee had accepted the panel of experts' approved survey. Such categories had been proposed by Pace (1981) as a means to make Likert scale items reflect more continuous data and be more valid for interpretation. Prior studies such as one conducted by Heiss (1982) had successfully applied these categories in parent surveys. During the data analysis process, the researcher and doctoral student coders observed that the survey rating scale seemed to not give clarity and equal weight to each response option, which might have confused some parents. After noting these results, the researcher and the dissertation chair would have preferred a more continuous and clarifying set of categories.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1. School administrators and teachers should consider creating a culture that specifically welcomes, encourages, and rewards father involvement at all education levels in any of the six typologies including parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community. Such a culture would give fathers the opportunity to feel more connected with the school, which might impact their decisions about the various parental involvement activities in other typologies that need their attention.

Findings in the mothers' and fathers' survey data indicated a strong perception of fathers mostly participating in the category of parenting at home, regardless of fathers' educational levels. School administrators and teachers should ask fathers for their specific interests and academic level, then provide volunteer opportunities with tasks that fathers can choose to do according to their experience level. Also, the school could decorate the walls with posters, photos, and drawings of powerful messages to parents about who is welcome in the school,

including fathers. The school should specifically recognize and reward those fathers yearly, such as by hosting a father-daughter, a father-son, or father-child event. Such an event could include a nomination of father of the year based on his participation in all six typologies.

Recommendation 2. School officials should adopt and implement student-led conferences and assemblies during hours that fathers and mothers can attend. Such a change will provide opportunities for employed fathers to improve their parental involvement by attending to their children's school activities at their convenient times.

Qualitative data suggested that fathers make time to attend to their children's events such as academic achievement recognition, cultural events, sports events, and performing arts activities. Therefore school officials should implement student-led conferences that will help the school to have more parental involvement and encourage non-involved parents to participate as they see their children engaged in activities such as leading their own conferences. It would be important to take into consideration work schedules and practicality to maximize parent attendance. Due to conflicting schedules related to work, child care, or other responsibilities, parents should be notified in advance of the events in which their children might want to participate and the month when the event will happen. It would be beneficial to first mention events during back-to-school nights and also on an ongoing basis with short flyers, emails, and texts.

Recommendation 3. School districts should establish practices that encourage schools to communicate with all fathers, including in two-parent families, single-parent families, or nonresident fathers. Such a practice will help to develop a communication strategy to establish a warm, personal, and productive partnership between fathers and the school. All fathers should be encouraged to stay actively involved in their children's education. The school district should

instruct schools to provide nonresident fathers as well as mothers with students' progress reports and other important information. If both parents live in the same home address, communication should be sent to both parents. If one of the parents moves out of the house, that parent should receive notices at a separate address if new contact information has been provided.

During school registration, school personnel should make it clear to all parents that fathers and mothers as well as guardians are expected to participate in parent-teacher conferences and IEP meetings if applicable. For example, schools should ask explicitly for the father's name, address, and phone numbers if the mother states the father is at a different address. When inviting parents to a meeting, school personnel should state that both parents are expected to attend and re-schedule the meeting if both parents cannot make the scheduled time. Fathers should be informed that they are expected to help at home with their children's assignments if and when their children are in their care.

Recommendation 4. School administrators should consider creating a team to reach out to fathers specifically by contacting every father to let them know that they are expected to participate in their children's education. This process will facilitate a more accessible and practical communication manner that meets the needs of the family.

Fathers' survey data indicated that there is a lack of extended invitation to fathers to participate in their children's school activities. For this reason, school administrators should create a team that attempts to call every household that indicates the presence of a father. Fathers could be reached through short text messages, written communication addressed to both parents, or short emails. Schools should encourage a welcoming environment for fathers to take part in school committees and volunteering activities where fathers might be able to choose a task. Policies should encourage racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity to create a diverse

environment where all parents would want to participate, as recommended by Epstein (2010). Fathers should be contacted every month to invite them to all school activities and to take on leadership positions. Lastly, if there are activities for fathers, they should be offered outside the school's regular schedule to give opportunities to fathers who are employed.

Recommendation 5. Administrators should instruct teachers to create father-focused events that demonstrate the school's interest in connecting with fathers. Such a practice will allow parents to feel empowered and committed to being a part of their children's learning environment.

Fathers' survey and interview data indicated that fathers' feel they do not receive invitations to participate in the school and that the volunteer atmosphere is not welcoming to fathers. Fathers expressed that invitations for parental involvement should be clear and specific to fathers. Administrators should instruct teachers to find out what interests the fathers have in their children's school activities and what they would like to contribute to the school. A survey should be distributed at the beginning of the school year to collect this type of information (i.e., what parents are willing and able to contribute to the school). Communication should be sent through brief, targeted flyers as well as messages through electronic media such as phone texts and emails.

Recommendation 6. Universities and school districts should make it a priority to recruit more male prospective elementary teachers to increase the number of men working in a traditionally female profession. Such a practice will provide fathers with the opportunities to hold an active role construction and change their perceptions about the school's parental involvement environment. In the quantitative and qualitative data, fathers indicated that they feel alienated due to the feminine-oriented school environment. For this reason, universities and

school districts should establish more recruitment goals for each university for credential programs to boost the number of male teacher candidates.

School districts should hire more male office staff to work in the front office and around the school to promote a more gender-balanced staff. If the school had more gender-balanced staff, fathers might feel more comfortable attending their children's activities and may feel more empowered to take part in school activities such as volunteering.

Recommendation 7. Teachers should be clear with their policies and homework procedures when sending long projects home so all family members can participate. Doing so will give fathers opportunities to have a positive influence on their children's academic outcomes through the school's curriculum. Separate communications from teachers should be sent to nonresident fathers so they will have the opportunity to work with their children while monitoring the homework with adequate directions. It is important that directions, processes, and expectations are clearly stated to the parents in an understandable manner. Promoting learning in the home environment is critical to students' academic achievement.

Recommendation 8. Other researchers studying parental involvement should revise the parents' surveys to include a more continuous and clear set of response categories for the variables used in the present study. Doing so will aid new studies on father involvement in their children's education to gather accurate responses in their data. The researcher recommends that other studies use survey response categories that utilize more precise numeracy for the Heiss categories, such as *never during past year*, *1-2 times during past year*, *3-6 times during past year*, *1-2 times per month during past year*, *1-3 times per week during past year*, and *daily during past year*. These categories could provide more accurate data and precise findings.

Recommendations for Future Research

To conclude this case study of father involvement in an elementary school employing Epstein's (2011) six typologies, the researcher offers the following suggestions for possible areas of exploration for further investigation in the topic of father involvement in their children's school activities.

1. Use the interview case study's methodology with different father populations such as those who are actively involved to compare with this study's findings of those who are not actively involved. In addition, use the surveys to compare older and younger fathers' involvement in volunteering at their children's school.
2. Consider the application of Epstein's (2011) model to study father involvement where the school staff is equally gender-balanced compared to a school with a majority of female faculty and staff.
3. Use action research to implement the recommended encouragements for fathers' involvement and study the results, comparing before and after measures of the effects on student achievement.
4. Consider conducting a longitudinal time span study of fathers' involvement from grades K through eight and its effects on student achievement.

Conclusion

Recently, father engagement has been promoted at federal and state levels; however, the local level is not widely endorsed. Therefore this study's purpose is to educate the local levels of government, universities, school districts, administrators, teachers, and fathers that father involvement in their children's education should be a top priority.

The literature reviewed for this case study contributed to learning more about the perceptions of mothers, fathers, and school personnel in regard to existing father involvement. The development of this study involved mixed methods of qualitative and quantitative data collection and triangulation of survey data, interviews, and field notes.

Eight conclusions are based on the results of this case study in combination with the literature review of other similar exploratory studies. Therefore, conclusions and recommendations were offered accordingly.

Epstein's (2011) six typologies theoretical model was used to support the study. This model contained the six typologies of parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community, which appeared the most appropriate model to use to study the fathers' perceptions of their involvement in their children's education. The recommendations of this study urge all academic practitioners to promote and practice a father-friendly culture.

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APPENDIX A

Programs to Support Father Involvement in U.S. Schools, Childcare Centers, and Communities

Site	Program description
Buhrer Elementary School (Pre-K-5)	Cleveland, Ohio, provides family math courses for mothers and fathers and all home-school communications are in at least two languages.
Cane Run Elementary School (K-5)	Louisville, Kentucky, families participate in the Even Start Program, with parents studying for the General Education Diploma while children are in school or the on-site nursery.
R.E.A.D. to Kids <u>R</u> econn <u>e</u> cting <u>E</u> duc <u>a</u> tion <u>a</u> nd <u>D</u> ads	Kansas City, Missouri, is a project of the Urban Fathering Project.
Kindering Center (Pre-K and elementary)	Bellevue, Washington, has established a weekly support group for fathers of children with special needs, run by the National Fathering Network
Avance Child and Family Development Program (Pre-K)	San Antonio, Texas, offers a 33-week fatherhood curriculum, covering topics such as child growth and development, handling stress, learning to live without violence, and childhood illnesses.
Mary Hooker Elementary School Family Resource Center	Hartford, Connecticut, primarily serves Puerto Rican low-income families who are either bilingual in Spanish and English or speak Spanish as their primary language.
Pinellas County Head Start's Accepting the Leadership Challenge	Florida, a male involvement initiative, began by taking 30 men away for the weekend and leading them through a bonding exercise which helped them to form a group.
Fairfax-San Anselmo Children's Center (Pre-K and after-school)	Fairfax, California, on one Saturday per month, as part of the Men's Breakfast Program, fathers have breakfast with their children, have a fathers-only discussion led by the center director, do yard work with their children and other fixing up activities in the center.
Florence S. Brown Pre-K Program	Rochester, New York, holds one lunchtime meeting per month and one evening meeting per month.
Sunbelt Human Advancement Resources, Inc. Head Start (SHARE)	Greenville, South Carolina, male volunteers visit men at the Perry Correctional Center to provide inmate fathers with information on Head Start and its services to children and families, as well as mentoring and life-skills training.
Parents as Teachers (Pre-K)	St. Louis, Missouri, is a statewide program, widely recognized as a national model, that advocates that parents are children's

	first teachers.
Hueco Elementary School (Pre-K-6)	El Paso, Texas, all parents participate in the "Super Readers" program, which provides incentives for parents to read with their children.
Roosevelt High School (9-12)	Dallas, Texas, teams of faculty, parents and other community leaders walk door-to-door during their "Walk for Success."

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse. Retrieved from <https://www.fatherhood.gov/for-programs/for-your-fathers/fathers-and-education>

APPENDIX B

Permission to Use Epstein's School, Family, and Community

From: Joyce Epstein [XXXXXX@XXX.XXX]
 Sent: Saturday, July 06, 2013 11:28 AM
 To: Melendez, Elena
 Subject: RE: Request for Permission to Use Model

7-6-13

To: Elena Melendez

From: Joyce Epstein

RE: Permission to use model and other information

Thank you for your note. I am glad to know of your interest in research on school, family, and community partnerships.

1. You certainly may use my theory of overlapping spheres of influence in your dissertation at Pepperdine University. You do not need permission to do that. All that is necessary is that you cite the work appropriately in your documents and reports.

Epstein, J. L. (2011). School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools. Second Edition. Boulder CO: Westview Press.

2. If you still are looking for surveys, please note:

You will find information about the surveys that we offer on our website, <http://www.partnershipschools.org><<http://www.partnershipschools.org/>> in the section Publications and Products. The surveys include:

Elementary/middle level surveys:

Sheldon, S. B. & Epstein, J. L. (2007). Parent Survey on Family and Community Involvement in the Elementary and Middle Grades. Baltimore: Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships, Johns Hopkins University.

Sheldon, S. B. & Epstein, J. L. (2007). Student Survey on Family and Community Involvement in the Elementary and Middle Grades. Baltimore: Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships, Johns Hopkins University.

Epstein, J. L. & Salinas, K. C. (1993) Surveys and Summaries: Questionnaires for Teachers and Parents in the Elementary and Middle Grades. Baltimore: Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships, Johns Hopkins University.

Click on the CHART that describes the various surveys that are available and their scales. The 1993 and 2007 parent questionnaires cover some different measures.

Print the ORDER FORM to obtain the Survey Packet for Elementary/Middle Grades.

All that we ask is that you provide full reference on the surveys and in your reports/bibliographies so that your readers will know where the surveys originated.

ALSO:

There are inventories based on the six types of involvement in chapters 5 and 9 of our handbook:

Epstein, J. L. et al. (2009). School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action, third edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

The inventories were designed as "team activities" to assess progress by schools' Action Teams for Partnerships that are developing and improving their programs of family and community involvement using our framework of six types of involvement. The inventories were not designed for individual reports in large samples. Thus, we do not have reliability statistics on this measure.

Best regards to Dr. Hiatt-Michael, and best of luck with your project.

[cid:image001.jpg@01CE7A55.1C2DB750]

Joyce L. Epstein, Ph.D.
 Director, Center on School, Family, and
 Community Partnerships and
 National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS)

Research Professor of Sociology and Education

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Web: <http://www.partnershipschools.org><<http://www.partnershipschools.org/>>

APPENDIX C

Certificate of Completion of “Protecting Human Research Participants” Course



APPENDIX D

Internal Review Board Approval Letter

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board

November 19, 2013

Elena Levine-Melendez

Protocol #: E1013D06

Project Title: Father Involvement in an Elementary School: A Case Study

Dear Ms. Levine-Melendez:

Thank you for submitting your application, *Father Involvement in an Elementary School: A Case Study*, for exempt review to Pepperdine University's Graduate and Professional Schools Institutional Review Board (GPS IRB). The IRB appreciates the work you and your faculty advisor, Dr. Diana Hiatt-Michael, have done on the proposal. The IRB has reviewed your submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials. Upon review, the IRB has determined that the above entitled project meets the requirements for exemption under the federal regulations (45 CFR 46 - <http://www.nihtraining.com/ohsrsite/guidelines/45cfr46.html>) that govern the protections of human subjects. Specifically, section 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) states:

(b) Unless otherwise required by Department or Agency heads, research activities in which the only involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the following categories are exempt from this policy:

Category (2) of 45 CFR 46.101, research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: a) Information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and b) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit a **Request for Modification Form** to the GPS IRB. Because your study falls under exemption, there is no requirement for continuing IRB review of your project. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for exemption from 45 CFR 46.101 and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the GPS IRB.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite our best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the GPS IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete explanation of the event and your response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the

timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the GPS IRB and the appropriate form to be used to report this information can be found in the *Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual* (see link to "policy material" at <http://www.pepperdine.edu/irb/graduate/>).

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all further communication or correspondence related to this approval. Should you have additional questions, please contact Michelle Blas, Director of Student Success at gpsirb@pepperdine.edu. On behalf of the GPS IRB, I wish you success in this scholarly pursuit.

Sincerely,



Thema Bryant-Davis, Ph.D.
Chair, Graduate and Professional Schools IRB

cc: Dr. Lee Kats, Vice Provost for Research and Strategic Initiatives
Ms. Alexandra Roosa, Director Research and Sponsored Programs
Dr. Diana Hiatt-Michael, Faculty Chair

APPENDIX E

Request Letter to School Principal

September 30, 2013

Dear Mr. [redacted] School Principal

I am currently enrolled at Pepperdine University, working on my Educational Doctorate in Organizational Leadership program. I am hereby requesting your permission to conduct my study on fathers' involvement in their children's education at your school.

In order to gather evidence to answer the formulated research questions for the study, I am requesting your permission to contact the following individuals in your campus: Administrators, teachers, and fathers to determine their interest in completing a survey and interviewing with me regarding the topic of father involvement. All written instruments, individual's names, school names, and information received will be kept confidential and pseudonyms will be used for each participant.

The purpose of my study is to examine the reasons why fathers come to be engaged, how more fathers can begin to become engaged, the ways in which fathers stayed engaged, and how such engagement influences academic achievement.

I am available to answer any questions that you may have pertaining this study, and can provide additional information at any time. Please feel free to contact me at: (661) 406-7257 or by e-mail at: elena.melendez@pepperdine.edu.

If you agree to my request to contact administrators, teachers, and fathers at your school, please send me a written permission.

I would greatly appreciate your consideration to this request, and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Elena Levine-Melendez,
Doctoral student at Pepperdine University

APPENDIX F

Permission From School Principal to Conduct Study

9/20/13

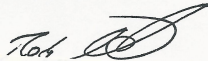
To: Elena Melendez

Re: Request to contact people for survey

Dear Mrs. Melendez,

I am writing this letter in response to your request to contact members of the _____ staff and members of our community to determine their interest in completing a survey and to be interviewed regarding the topic of father involvement. I believe that this study can assist our school in enhancing fathers' involvement and you have my permission to continue. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have further questions or need additional information.

Respectfully,



Principal

APPENDIX G

Survey Informed Consent Letter

Code: _____
(Pre-coded before distribution)
Color of paper: _____

My name is Elena Levine-Melendez. I am working on an approved research study for Pepperdine University under the direction of Dr. Diana B. Hiatt-Michael. The purpose of this survey is to collect information from knowledgeable people like you to study the factors of father involvement in their children's education.

I greatly appreciate your time to participate on this 5 to 10 minutes voluntary survey. You can decide whether or not you want to participate at any time during this survey. If you should decide to participate and find that you do not want to continue answering this survey, you have the right to stop without being questioned about your decision. I also reassure you that all of your responses will be confidential. This study neither presents more than a minimal risk to you nor would disclose any data outside the study. Also, it will not place you under any risk of criminal/civil liability or damage to your financial status, employability, or reputation; and no deception will be used in any manner. Your participation in this survey will contribute to gain knowledge on how to invite more father participation at the George Washington School.

The pre-coded numbers in this survey will be used for data collection and will be deleted and/or shredded after the data collection has been completed and before the data is coded. I assure you that confidentiality will be used at all times. All survey results will be used for research purposes only. At the end of this study, the head of school will also make available results to parents, staff and other stakeholders.

Again, I appreciate your participation in this survey. If there should be any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Elena Levine-Melendez

Telephone [REDACTED]

e-mail at: [REDACTED]

APPENDIX H

Interview Informed Consent Letter

I hereby authorize Elena Levine-Melendez, a doctoral student under the supervision of Dr. Diana B. Hiatt-Michael from the Organizational Leadership, doctoral program at Pepperdine University, Graduate School of Education and Psychology to include me in her research project entitled Father Involvement in an Elementary School: A Case Study. I fully understand that my participation in this study is strictly voluntary.

I understand that I have been asked to participate in a research study, which is designed to investigate the impact of father involvement in their children's education. The study will require an individual meeting of approximately 30-40 minutes with each participant.

I acknowledge that I have been asked to participate in this study because I am a parent of a child/children enrolled at the school where family involvement research will be conducted.

I understand I will be asked to participate in a face-to-face interview where I will answer questions about family involvement in their children's education. I also understand that I can have this interview over the telephone and can schedule it at anytime, and place where is convenient to me.

To assure confidentiality, I understand that my name will not appear in any electronic or paper copy document. I also understand that researcher will assign a code number to the interview using a master code sheet. The code number will be used for data analysis purposes only. Code sheet will be electronically deleted if stored in flash drive or shredded if it is a paper copy as soon as the data collection has been completed and before the data is coded.

I understand that if I decide to participate in this study, my interview will be audio recorded and my narrative will be transcribed using Microsoft Word document. The recorded file and transcription document will be used for research purposes only. Once the study is completed, the recorded file and transcription documents will be stored in a locked safe cabinet for a period of five years. At the end of the five-year period, recorded file and transcription documents will be destroyed and shredded.

The potential risks of participating in this study are minimal to none. In the event, I do experience fatigue or need to take a short break, one will be granted to me and the interview may be scheduled at a different time.

I understand the benefits to this study may include: (1) insights in which ways fathers are involved in their children's education; (2) gain knowledge on the perceptions of fathers involvement in their children's schooling; (3) exploration on what activities do school personnel utilize to engage the non-involved fathers; and (4) investigate the activities offered at this school to involve fathers.

I understand the possible direct benefits from my participation in this study include receiving a beverage and a snack as a compensation for my time. If I choose to withdraw from the study, or

I must end my study participation through no fault of mine, I will still be eligible to receive a beverage and a snack. I understand that there will be no medical treatments given in this study.

I understand that I have the right to refuse to participate in, or to withdraw from, the study at any time without prejudice to my current or future standing as a student. I also have the right to refuse to answer any question I choose not to answer. Participation or withdrawal in this study will not place me at risk of criminal/civil liability or damage to my financial status, employability, or reputation; and no deception will be used. I also understand that there might be times that the researcher may find it necessary to end my study participation.

I understand that no information gathered from my participation in the study will be released to others without my permission, unless law requires such a disclosure. I understand that under California law, the privilege of confidentiality does not extend to information about the abuse of a child, an elderly, or any dependent adult. Likewise, if a person indicates he/she wishes to do serious harm to self, others, or property, the investigator will report any such information mentioned to the authorities. The obligation to report includes alleged or probable abuse as well as known abuse.

If the findings of the study are published, presented to a professional audience, or used for future studies and collaboration with other investigators, no personally identifying information will be released. Only the information gathered would be made available to other investigators with whom the investigator collaborates in future research. Again, the data will be stored in a secure manner and only the investigator will have access. The data and any supporting documents will be destroyed within five years of after the completion of the study.

I understand that if I have any questions regarding the study procedures, I can contact Elena Levine-Melendez at [REDACTED], to get answers to my questions. If I have further questions, I may contact Dr. Diana Hiatt-Michael at [REDACTED]. If I have further questions, I may contact Veronica Jimenez, MPH, CIP, Manager, GPS IRB and Dissertation Support, Pepperdine University, 6100 Center Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90045.

I understand the information in the consent form regarding my participation in the research project. All of my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I have received a copy of this informed consent, which I have read and understand. I hereby consent to participate in the research study described above.

Participant's Signature

Date

Principal Investigator

Date

APPENDIX I

Fathers' Survey

Father's Survey						Code No.:
This survey is intended to collect your opinions about your involvement in your child's schooling. These opinions will help your child's school to improve relationships between the school, family, and community.						
Instructions: Please read the question, and check one or more answers that apply to you. Note that all answers that you provide are valid.						
Number of children you have at the same school:						
1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____
Grade Level of your child/children:						
K <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>
Your marital Status. Please check the box that applies to you.						
Single <input type="checkbox"/>	Married <input type="checkbox"/>	Divorced <input type="checkbox"/>	Separated <input type="checkbox"/>	Widowed <input type="checkbox"/>	Domestic Partnership <input type="checkbox"/>	
Your highest level of education. Check the box that applies to you.						
Elementary School <input type="checkbox"/>	Middle School <input type="checkbox"/>	High School <input type="checkbox"/>	Associates Degree <input type="checkbox"/>	Bachelors Degree <input type="checkbox"/>	Masters Degree <input type="checkbox"/>	Some Post Graduate Degree <input type="checkbox"/>
Please write your current profession/job: _____						
Your ethnicity – optional						
African American/Black <input type="checkbox"/>	American Indian/ Alaska Native <input type="checkbox"/>	Asian <input type="checkbox"/>	Filipino <input type="checkbox"/>	Hispanic/Latino <input type="checkbox"/>	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/>	White <input type="checkbox"/>
Two or more races <input type="checkbox"/>	None reported <input type="checkbox"/>					

Instructions: Please circle your answers according to this rating scale. Please try not to skip any questions. Your sincere opinions are greatly appreciated.

Rating Scale:	1. Not at all	2. A few Times	3. Sometimes	4. Most of the Time	5. All the Time
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Please rate your involvement in your child's/Children's schooling.

1	Monitoring/assisting your child/children's homework	1	2	3	4	5
2	Helping monitoring your child's/children's school attendance	1	2	3	4	5
3	Attending extracurricular activities with your child such as sports, music, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Attended a general meeting to involve fathers in the children's education	1	2	3	4	5
5	Attended a PTA activity for fathers	1	2	3	4	5
6	Attended an event to celebrate academic achievement sports, cultural or performing arts events	1	2	3	4	5
Rating Scale:		1. Not at all	2. A Few Times	3. Sometimes	4. Most of the Time	5. All the Time

Please rate your level of communication with your child's/children's school.

7	To inform you about your child's /children's academic progress	1	2	3	4	5
8	To give you any positive comments about your child's behavior	1	2	3	4	5
9	To make known/discuss any challenges your child/children may be facing	1	2	3	4	5

10	Communication through parent-teacher conferences	1	2	3	4	5
11	Communication through your child's planner/notes	1	2	3	4	5
12	Emails to and from the teacher	1	2	3	4	5
13	Phone calls to and from the teacher	1	2	3	4	5
14	Attended a meeting to discuss child's/children's academic progress	1	2	3	4	5
Rating Scale:		1. Not at all	2. A Few Times	3. Sometimes	4. Most of the Time	5. All the Time
Please rate your participation in the following volunteering activities.						
15	Volunteering in the classroom	1	2	3	4	5
16	Chaperoning field trips	1	2	3	4	5
17	Donating time/talent to the school	1	2	3	4	5
18	Please write what might motivate you to volunteer in your child's classroom					
Rating Scale:		1. Not at all	2. A Few Times	3. Sometimes	4. Most of the Time	5. All the Time
Please rate your participation in providing a learning at home environment.						
19	Providing space with desk and light	1	2	3	4	5
20	Providing computer to do his/her homework	1	2	3	4	5
21	Providing a regular schedule for doing homework	1	2	3	4	5
22	Providing school supplies	1	2	3	4	5
Rating Scale:		1. Not at all	2. A Few Times	3. Sometimes	4. Most of the Time	5. All the Time
Please rate your participation in the following decision-making school organizations.						
23	Parent Teacher Association (PTA)	1	2	3	4	5
24	Site Committee	1	2	3	4	5
25	English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC)	1	2	3	4	5
26	Safety Committee	1	2	3	4	5

Rating Scale:		1. Not at all	2. A Few Times	3. Sometimes	4. Most of the Time	5. All the Time
Please rate your participation in the following community organizations.						
27	Young Man's Christian Association (YMCA)	1	2	3	4	5
28	The Family Resource Center	1	2	3	4	5
29	Boys and Girls Club	1	2	3	4	5
30	Children Center of the Antelope Valley	1	2	3	4	5
31	Other: _____					
32	Attended a general Meeting to involve fathers in their children's education	1	2	3	4	5
33	Attended a PTA activity for fathers	1	2	3	4	5
34	Attended a meeting, conference, workshop, etc. specifically for fathers	1	2	3	4	5
35	Other: _____					
Rating Scale:		1. Not at all	2. A Few Times	3. Sometimes	4. Most of the Time	5. All the Time
Rate your difficulties for not participating in your child's/children's school activities:						
A	My work schedule	1	2	3	4	5
B	My child's /children's school hours	1	2	3	4	5
C	Difficulties to find child/adult care	1	2	3	4	5
D	I don't have transportation to my child's/children's	1	2	3	4	5
E	No one at my child's school has asked me to participate	1	2	3	4	5
F	I feel dissatisfied with the school's communication to involve parents	1	2	3	4	5

G	I am not interested in participating	1	2	3	4	5
H	List other reasons you may have:	<hr/>				

APPENDIX J

Mothers' Survey

Mothers' Survey						Code No.:
This survey is intended to collect your opinions about your involvement in your child's schooling. These opinions will help your child's school to improve relationships between the school, family, and community.						
Instructions: Please read the question, and check one or more answers that apply to you. Note that all answers that you provide are valid.						
Number of children you have at the same school:						
1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____
Grade Level of your child/children:						
K <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>
Your marital Status. Please check the box that applies to you.						
Single <input type="checkbox"/>	Married <input type="checkbox"/>	Divorced <input type="checkbox"/>	Separated <input type="checkbox"/>	Widowed <input type="checkbox"/>	Domestic Partnership <input type="checkbox"/>	
Your highest level of education. Check the box that applies to you.						
Elementary School <input type="checkbox"/>	Middle School <input type="checkbox"/>	High School <input type="checkbox"/>	Associates Degree <input type="checkbox"/>	Bachelors Degree <input type="checkbox"/>	Masters Degree <input type="checkbox"/>	Some Post Graduate Degree <input type="checkbox"/>
Please write your current profession/job: _____						
Your ethnicity - optional						
African American/ Black <input type="checkbox"/>	American Indian/ Alaska Native <input type="checkbox"/>	Asian <input type="checkbox"/>	Filipino <input type="checkbox"/>	Hispanic/Latino <input type="checkbox"/>	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/>	White <input type="checkbox"/>
Two or more races <input type="checkbox"/>	None reported <input type="checkbox"/>					

Instructions: Please circle your answers according to this rating scale. Please try not to skip any questions. Your sincere opinions are greatly appreciated.

Rating Scale:		1. Not at all	2. A few Times	3. Sometimes	4. Most of the Time	5. All the Time
Please rate the father of your child/children involvement in parenting/education.						
1	Monitoring/assisting your child/children's homework	1	2	3	4	5
2	Helping monitoring your child's/children's school attendance	1	2	3	4	5
3	Attending extracurricular activities with your child such as sports, music, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Attended a general meeting to involve fathers in the children's education	1	2	3	4	5
5	Attended a PTA activity for fathers	1	2	3	4	5
6	Attended an event to celebrate academic achievement sports, cultural or performing arts events	1	2	3	4	5
Rating Scale:		1. Not at all	2. A Few Times	3. Sometimes	4. Most of the Time	5. All the Time

Please rate your level of communication with your child's/children's father with the school.

7	To inform you about your child's /children's academic	1	2	3	4	5
8	To give you any positive comments about your child's behavior	1	2	3	4	5
9	To make known/discuss any challenges your child/children may be facing.	1	2	3	4	5

10	Communication through parent-teacher conferences	1	2	3	4	5
11	Communication through your child's planner/notes	1	2	3	4	5
12	Emails to and from the teacher	1	2	3	4	5
13	Phone calls to and from the teacher	1	2	3	4	5
14	Attended a meeting to discuss child's/children's academic progress	1	2	3	4	5
Rating Scale:		1. Not at all	2. A Few Times	3. Sometimes	4. Most of the Time	5. All the Time
Please rate your participation in the following volunteering activities.						
15	Volunteering in the classroom	1	2	3	4	5
16	Chaperoning field trips	1	2	3	4	5
17	Donating time/talent to the school	1	2	3	4	5
18	Please write what might motivate you to volunteer in your child's classroom	<hr/> <hr/>				
Rating Scale:		1. Not at all	2. A Few Times	3. Sometimes	4. Most of the Time	5. All the Time
Please rate the father of your child's/children's participation in providing a learning at home environment.						
19	Providing space with desk, and light	1	2	3	4	5
20	Providing computer to do his/her homework	1	2	3	4	5
21	Providing a regular schedule for doing homework	1	2	3	4	5
22	Providing school supplies	1	2	3	4	5

Rating Scale:		1. Not at all	2. A Few Times	3. Sometimes	4. Most of the Time	5. All the Time
Please rate the father of your child/children participation in the following decision-making school committees.						
23	Parent Teacher Association (PTA)	1	2	3	4	5
24	Site Committee	1	2	3	4	5
25	English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC)	1	2	3	4	5
26	Safety Committee	1	2	3	4	5
Rating Scale:		1. Not at all	2. A Few Times	3. Sometimes	4. Most of the Time	5. All the Time
Please rate the father of your child/children participation in the following community organizations.						
27	Young Man's Christian Association (YMCA)	1	2	3	4	5
28	The Family Resource Center	1	2	3	4	5
29	Boys and Girls Club	1	2	3	4	5
30	Children Center of the Antelope Valley	1	2	3	4	5
31	Other: _____					
32	Attended a general Meeting to involve fathers in their children's education	1	2	3	4	5
33	Attended a PTA activity for fathers	1	2	3	4	5
34	Attended a meeting, conference, workshop, etc. specifically for fathers	1	2	3	4	5
35	Other: _____					

Please answer the following questions regarding the father of your child/children involvement in schooling.

A	Do you want your child's father more engaged with your child's school activities?	Yes _____ No _____
B	Please write anything that the teacher/administrat or might have done to encourage your child's father to participate in your children's activities.	<hr/>

APPENDIX K

Fathers' Interview Questions

Directions: Please answer the following questions:

- 1) How are you involved in your child's/children's education at home?
- 2) How are you involved at school?
- 3) How do communicate your concerns to the teacher or administrators?
- 4) In what ways does your child's/children's school welcome your involvement?
- 5) What is the school doing to increase your involvement?
- 6) What kind of parent workshops would be helpful for you to work with your child?
- 7) What do you do at home to get involved with your child's school-related activities?

Thank you so much for your participation.

APPENDIX L

Administrators' and Teachers' Interview Questions

Directions: Please answer the following questions:

- 1) How does your school support parental education or training?
- 2) How does your school keep non-involved fathers informed about school programs?
- 3) What are the efforts your school is doing to recruit or organize fathers that are less involved or non-involved in their children's education?
- 4) How is your school providing information and ideas to families about homework policies?
- 5) What is your school doing to invite non-involved fathers to participate in decision-making activities?
- 6) What is your school doing to inform non-involved fathers about students and families?

Thank you so much for your participation.